

LECTURES
ON THE
BOOK OF REVELATION

NOWELL



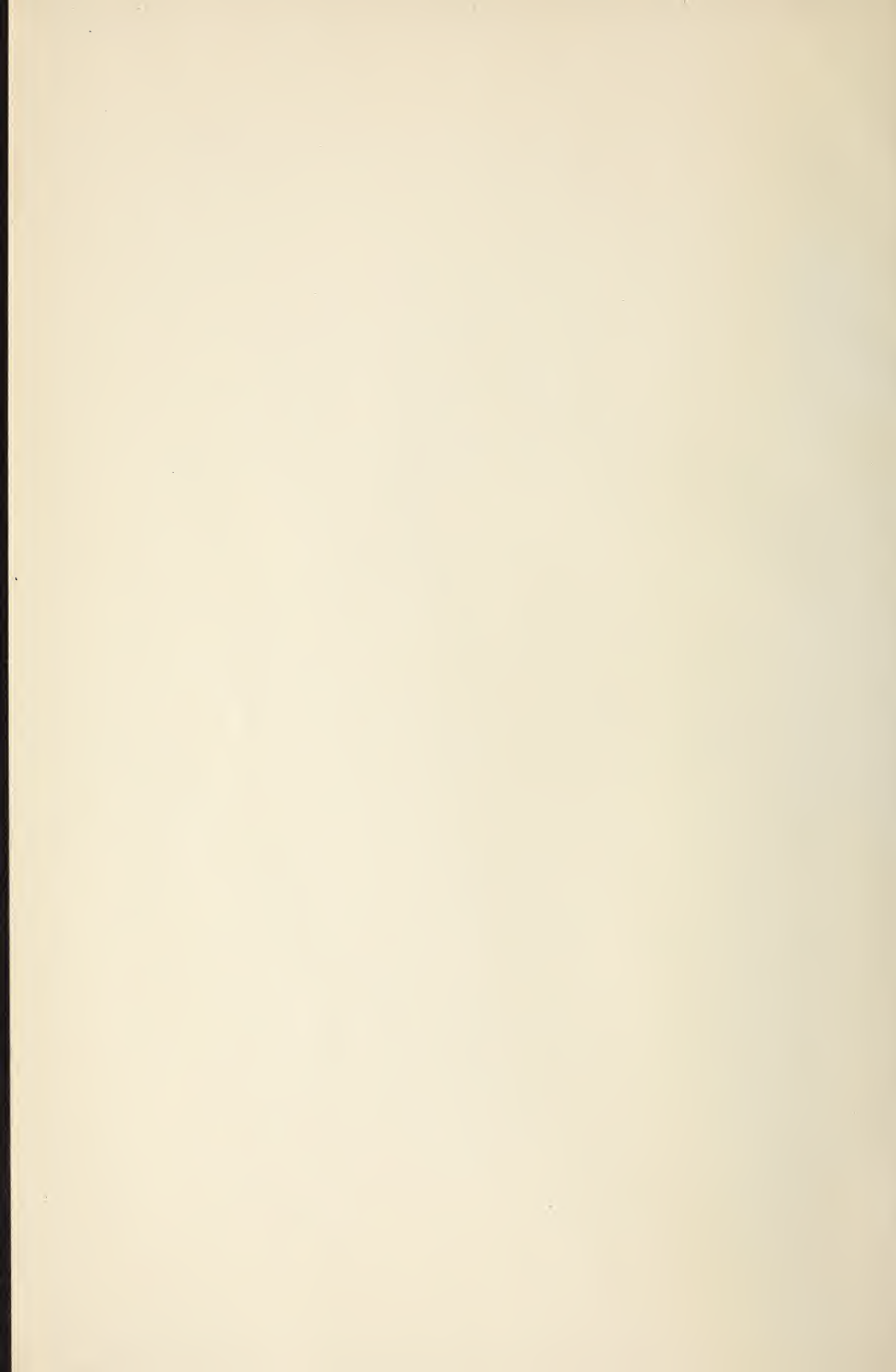
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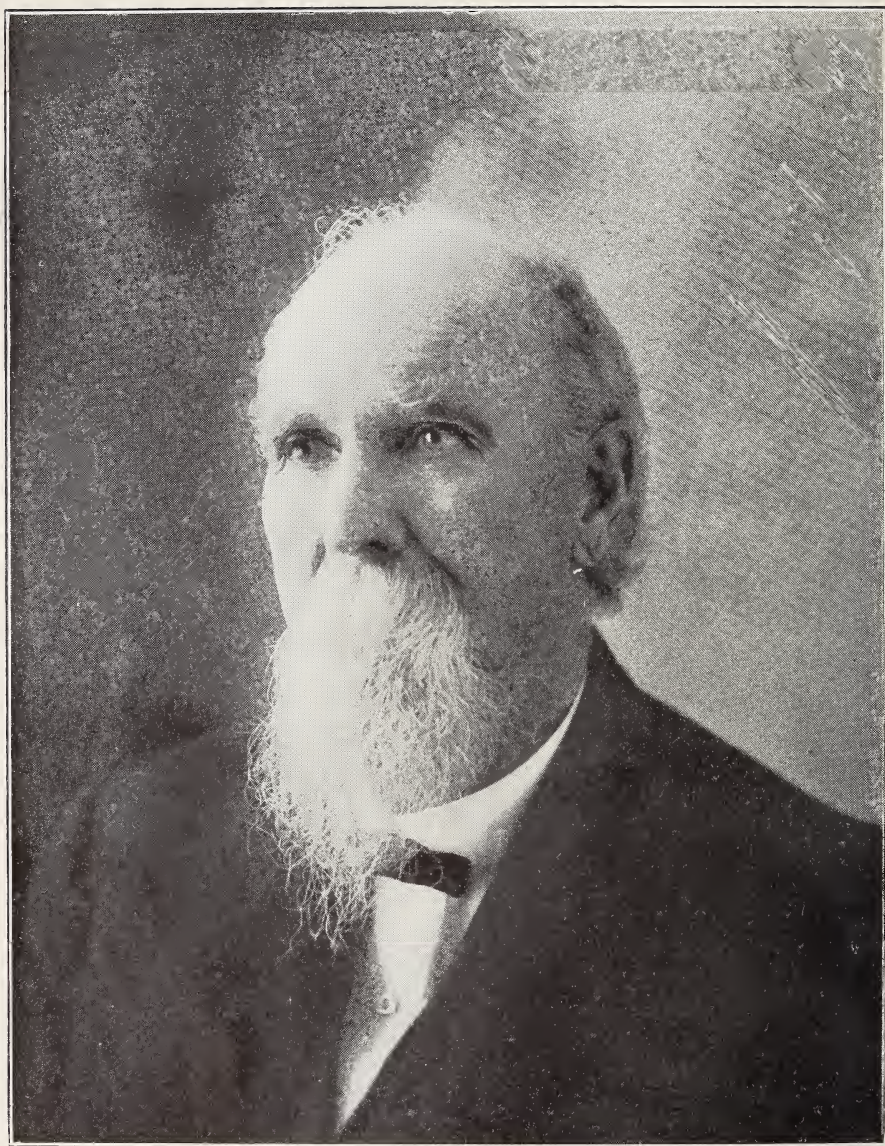
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REV. W. C. NOWELL.

LECTURES
ON THE
BOOK OF REVELATION

BY
W. C. Nowell
REV. W. C. NOWELL

WITH A BRIEF SKETCH OF THE
AUTHOR'S LIFE AND SIX
CHOICE SERMONS

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TO MY DEAR WIFE
MARY LACY NOWELL
WHO HAS BEEN SUCH A BLESSING
TO ME IN THIS AND ALL MY
OTHER WORK
THIS LITTLE BOOK IS
AFFECTIONATELY DEDICATED

PREFACE.

This little book is written especially for the ordinary Bible reader, who generally considers the Book of Revelation a profound mystery. The author does not claim to be infallible in his interpretations, nor does he expect every one to agree with him in his views. His aim is to give the simplest interpretation of the symbols and figures used in the book, and thereby make it interesting as well as profitable. After long and earnest study of the Book of Revelation, the author has given to the reader what he conceives to be the most likely meaning of the book, by interpreting its symbolism in the most rational manner. There may be errors in this little book; but if so, the author hopes and believes that they will do no real harm, as they will not misconstrue any Bible truth, nor add to, nor take from, God's word.

WENDELL, N. C., July, 1910.

W. C. N.

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INTRODUCTION.

The reader is requested not to skip over this introduction, as is frequently the case in taking up a new book, because in it will be found many things, which will help to a more perfect understanding of the balance of the book.

These Lectures originated as follows: While living in Spring Hope, N. C., some two years ago, a certain friend of mine asked me to explain in my next prayer meeting talk the sixth chapter of the Book of Revelation. I told him I couldn't well do that without taking up the entire context, which would include that part of the book from the beginning of the fourth chapter to the end of the eleventh. So, after considering the matter, I concluded to give a series of talks on the entire book. I did so, and as they made a profound impression on the minds of those who heard them, my wife and others urged me to write them up and have them published.

After coming to this place, Wendell, N. C., I decided to deliver these talks again, under the head of "Lectures on the Book of Revelation." These Lectures were so well received by all classes of the people, that, after much urging and encouragement, I finally decided to make the attempt to write this little book.

But the main object of this Introduction is to give the key to the Book of Revelation and the plan of its arrangement.

I will give the plan first. By reading the book carefully, we will see that it is divided into four main sections, as follows:

The first three chapters contain the introduction to the book, and the messages to the seven churches of Asia. This is the first section, and is omitted

in these Lectures. The second section contains from the fourth to the eleventh chapters inclusive. The third includes the twelfth to the nineteenth inclusive. The fourth and last section includes the other three chapters.

The second section, being the first in these Lectures, may be denominated the section of the Seals and the Trumpets. This covers the period from the beginning of Christianity to the ushering in of the Millennium, with special reference to the civil enemies of the church of God on earth. Of these civil enemies the first is the Jewish nation. The second is the pagan Roman Empire, or simply the Roman Empire East and West. Included in this also are the Saracen and Turkish powers.

The third section may be termed that of the Beasts and the Vials. This also covers the very same period of time as the first in these Lectures, but with special reference, not to the civil enemies of the church, but to the ecclesiastical or spiritual enemies thereof.

The fourth section may be called Eschatology, or the last things. This includes the Millenium, the last sharp conflict of the church with all her combined enemies, under the head of Gog and Magog, the resurrection, the judgment, and the final separation of good and evil.

The key to a book is a brief statement of what it contains or teaches. It is generally couched in the name the book bears. Here, however, the name, Revelation, is general, not definite. So the true key is to be found by answering the question, revelation of what?

In chapter 6:2 we read: "And I saw and behold a white horse: and he that sat on him had a bow; and a crown was given unto him: and he went forth conquering, and to conquer." Again, in chapter 19:11 we read as follows: "And I saw

heaven opened, and behold a white horse; and he that sat upon him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness he doth judge and make war."

The first of these passages states the beginning of a conflict between Christ and his followers, and Satan and his followers, which conflict is expressed in the first passage, not only as beginning, but as continuing also. In the second passage we will see by reading the balance of the nineteenth chapter that this is the end of that conflict, and that Christ and his people are the conquerors. Now we can give a statement of what the book of Revelation reveals, and that is the key.

It reveals, in symbolic language, and in symbolic terms, how Christ, the embodiment of all good, is conquering and will finally triumph over, Satan, the embodiment of all evil.

The phases under which Satan comes in conflict with Christ and his church are the three which first arrayed themselves against them in deadly conflict, viz.: The Jewish nation, the Roman Empire, and Popery.

It is well, also, to give here an explanation of the numbers which are frequently used in Revelation. The most common is seven. This may be called a sacred as well as a perfect, or complete number. It is doubtless founded on the seven days composing a week, the first and most common division of time. Then again we have the number four. This denotes completeness also, derived, perhaps, from the four seasons of the year, and the four points of the compass, as we would say. Twelve is also a favorite number in the book of Revelation, as well as in that of Daniel. It is doubtless founded on the twelve months of the year, the twelve patriarchs, and the twelve apostles. Again, 1260 days is common in Daniel, as well as in Revelation. It always means 1260 years. Forty and two months denote

the same number, each month containing 30 days. Three years and a half mean the same likewise. Also, time, and times and a half signify the same. Time one year, times two years, and a half year make three years and a half, or twelve hundred and sixty days.

The writer of the book of Revelation was John, the son of Zebedee, the brother of James. He is commonly called the beloved disciple. He lived to be very old, and is supposed to be the only one of the twelve apostles who died a natural death. He wrote the Gospel bearing his name, and the three short epistles likewise that are called by his name. He is supposed to have written the Revelation about the year 96 A. D. It is the last book of the Bible ever written and is a most fitting and beautiful ending of the Sacred Scriptures. John was said to have been banished by the Roman Emperor Domitian to Patmos, a little island in the Ægean Sea, between Asia Minor and Greece, because he was an active Christian. While on that island in banishment he had the wonderful visions related in the book of Revelation, of which the following Lectures are an attempted explanation.

LECTURE I.

This Lecture covers chapters four, five, and six.

Read the chapters carefully before reading the Lecture.

After John had received the messages to the seven churches in Asia, he looked and saw a door opened in heaven, and heard a voice calling him to come up there and he would learn of things which should be hereafter. Immediately he was in the spirit, that is, in a condition in which he could see and hear spiritual or heavenly things, as the apostle Paul was when he was caught up to the third heaven. He then saw a throne set in heaven and one sat upon it. This, of course, is a symbolic representation of God the Father similar to that in Ezekiel, first chapter. The apostle does not attempt any description of Him who sat on the throne, except that of the glowing of precious stones, or, as Ezekiel has it, of burning coals of fire. Four and twenty elders were sitting round about the throne clothed in white, and with crowns upon their heads. These elders represent some of God's highest servants, either human or angelic, we know not which. The lightnings, thunderings and voices denote God's almighty power. The seven burning lamps denote the fullness of the Spirit of God. The sea of glass shows the general glory of the scene. In and around the throne were "beasts," or living creatures, full of eyes. These denote the very highest of God's created beings. Being full of eyes shows their vast knowledge, wisdom and experience. These living creatures are described as having different appearances, denoting the different things they stand for or represent. The one like a lion denotes strength. That one like a calf or ox denotes patient endurance. The one like a man shows intelligence.

That one in the form of an eagle shows exaltation. All these living creatures are represented as giving glory to God continually, and the elders fall at His feet and cast their crowns before Him.

This whole chapter gives a manifest display of the God of the old Testament in all His glory, His power, and His holiness. But as there is no Christ, no mediator, He seems unapproachable in His awfulness, especially to poor sinners as we are.

But it is a very suitable prelude to the fifth chapter, which ushers in the new dispensation and the Kingdom of Heaven.

The fifth chapter reveals a book in the right hand of God the Father, written within and on the back side, and sealed with seven seals. A book in those days was a scroll rolled on a piece of wood, as a wall map in our days rolled on a stick. This book was as a long piece of vellum or dressed leather, written on both sides, and rolled up and sealed in seven different places. When the first seal was broken, it could be unrolled to the second, and what was on that part could be seen. Then, by breaking the second seal, one could see what was on the scroll to the third seal, and so on.

This book was a symbolic representation of God's purposes and plans in the scheme of man's redemption. And it further revealed the terrible conflicts which were to take place on the earth between the kingdom of God and the kingdom of Satan.

This book was sealed, and none were found worthy, or whose right and privilege it could be, to open and read therein, until the Lamb appeared in the midst of the throne. This Lamb seemed as if it had been slain. It had also seven horns and seven eyes. The slain lamb can be no other than Jesus the Lamb of God. The seven horns denote perfect or almighty power, as a horn is the emblem of

power; and the seven eyes symbolize his perfect or infinite ability to see and to know all things. The term seven denotes fullness, or perfection. He was called the Lion of the tribe of Judah, because he descended from that tribe, and he was the first or greatest of the tribe. He is called the root of David, because he as God was David's creator. In another place He is called the offspring of David, because, as to His humanity, He was a descendant of David's line. He alone could take and open the book, because He alone was able to fulfill the conditions. And these conditions were, that He should take our sins upon Himself, and die for them in our stead, and rise again from the dead, and ascend to heaven, and become our intercessor. This none could do but the Son of God.

When the Lamb took the book, as he had a right to do, the living creatures and the four and twenty elders fall down and worship him, showing that he is God, equal with the Father. The living creatures and elders also are said to have harps, which were symbols of praise, and golden vials filled with odors or incense, which is said to be the prayers of saints.

In other places in the book of Revelation, the prayers of saints are spoken of as incense with which God is well pleased. This shows that the prayers of God's people here on earth have a great deal to do with His dealings with mankind. In the ninth verse, the living creatures and the elders sing a new song, and in praising the Lamb, say to him, that he had redeemed them with his blood. This would seem to show that these beings were some distinguished ones of the human family. But the revised version reads it differently. So it is best, perhaps, to consider them to be some of the highest orders of the heavenly hosts. The chapter closes with a representation of the holy angels in vast

multitudes together with the living creatures and elders praising God and the Lamb for their wonderful works. In the Introduction, it was stated that the church, or the Kingdom of God, was to encounter three cruel persecuting powers, viz.: The Jewish nation, the Roman Empire, and Papal Rome, all of which would be finally overcome. This accords with what is said in Dan. 2:44: "And in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed: and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand forever."

In the sixth chapter, which we have now reached, we have a symbolic representation of how God, in accordance with what Jesus himself had predicted, brought speedy destruction upon the Jewish people as a nation, or commonwealth. This judgment began to fall upon the Jewish nation and their cherished city, Jerusalem, in the year 70 A. D., when the Roman army under Titus took and partially destroyed Jerusalem. And in the siege and sack of the city, the calamities were so awful that Jesus, in speaking of them, said, Matt. 24:21, that such things had never been before, nor should ever be again. And this dreadful event was made a type of the great judgment day. And in the year 135 A. D. another revolt was quelled in Judea by the Romans, in which a half million more of the Jews perished. Thus was the first persecuting enemy of God's church subdued and put out of the way. But we are not to infer from this that the Jewish people are finally rejected. As a persecuting power they no longer exist.

But, as the Jews themselves are preserved in a wonderful manner, we believe, in accordance with prophecy, that, in the fullness of time, they are to

be restored to their original Holy Land, and their nationality will be restored, though not as a persecuting power, but as the very heart of Christianity itself in the Millennial Age.

We now come to the opening of the seals. When the Lamb had opened the first seal, John saw a white horse, "and he that sat on him had a bow; and a crown was given unto him: and he went forth conquering and to conquer." This symbolizes the preaching of the gospel of peace, white being the emblem of love, peace, and good will. He that sat on the horse represents Christ and his apostles, and all who succeed them as true ministers of the gospel. Conquering and to conquer denotes the continuance, progress, and final success of the work as it reaches its consummation in the nineteenth chapter. The bow, as an instrument of war, shows that he wages war against the enemies of his kingdom. The crown signifies his kingly authority.

The gospel, here symbolized by the white horse and its rider, was preached almost, if not quite, all over the then known world, before the fall of Jerusalem. This reminds us of Matt. 24:14. "And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come." And this preaching of the word of God among men, though persecuted relentlessly by the rulers of both Jews and Gentiles, had a success in those early ages of the church, which is simply wonderful to contemplate. The whole world seemed to be filled with the new doctrine and its life-giving power and light. But the more it spread, and the more good it disseminated among the people, the more it was hated and persecuted by its enemies, among whom none were more bitter than the unbelieving Jews.

The opening of the second seal reveals a red

horse. And unto him who sat on it was given a great sword. Red denotes war, or bloodshed. This reminds us of what Jesus said in Matt. 24:6: "And ye shall hear of wars and rumors of wars." The Jewish people had sinned so grievously and against so much light, that God had given them over to the power of all sorts of evil, and had left their long cherished Temple "desolate." So they were led by the evil one to organize rebellion after rebellion against their Roman masters, and thus bring upon themselves and their cities and country calamities so dreadful that it almost chills the blood to read of them even at this distant day. But these wars and rumors, here signified by the red horse, were only a part of the "beginning of sorrows," as stated in Matt. 24:8, which sorrows were to culminate in the final fall of the city of Jerusalem.

The third seal being opened shows a black horse. This denotes famine and pestilence, and is a fulfillment of Matt. 24:7: "And there shall be famines and pestilences." Black denotes sufferings and calamities of this kind.

Famines were the result of wars and strifes among the people. These in turn hindered the people from their ordinary work in the fields, and caused food to become more and more scarce. Then the scarcity and the consequent unwholesomeness of food brought on pestilence. We in this favored land of plenty can't have an idea of the dreadful suffering which many of the Jewish people endured, especially in the besieged cities, when mothers are said to have cooked and eaten their own children.

When the fourth seal was opened, a pale horse appeared on which was seated Death, riding through the stricken land, followed by Hades, or the grave, the place of the dead. Paleness is a fit emblem of death. Who has not seen the awful pallor of death

on the once fair and blooming face? How dreadful was the condition of the people when, on account of sickness and hunger, they were dying so fast that Death is represented as riding through the country followed by his sad and awful retinue! But the people had sinned deeply and grievously and were adding to their sin every day by persecuting the followers of Him whom they had crucified through malice and envy.

The opening of the fifth seal revealed the souls of the martyrs under the altar in heaven, who were praying God to revenge their death on those who had murdered them. To them were given white robes and they were encouraged to wait a little season till their brethren, who were yet to be killed as they were, should join them. Their prayers were doubtless answered at the final fall of Jerusalem. But still this passage is closely connected with chapter 20:4, where all the martyrs receive their reward.

The opening of the sixth seal reveals the fall of Jerusalem under the most dreadful emblems imaginable. Yet these emblems, or figures, are in strict conformity with other passages bearing on the same subject. For instance, Joel 2:31: "The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before the great and terrible day of the Lord." Matt. 24:29: "Immediately after the tribulation of those days shall the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heaven shall be shaken." This last passage is shown to refer to the fall of Jerusalem by what is said in verse 34. "This generation shall not pass, till all these things be fulfilled." Mark 13:24 and Luke 21:25 give the same in substance.

But if we could get a just conception of the

awful scenes that were transacted, the dreadful calamities the people endured, and realize the situation, when the Roman army, after a long siege, finally broke down the walls, and rushed into the doomed city, almost packed with a starving and dying people, who had crowded into their beloved city in the vain hope that the God of Abraham and of David would yet protect them; and could we behold the sickening carnage that piled the streets with slaughtered men, women and children and caused gurgling streams of warm blood to flow over the once hallowed pavements of the Temple precincts, and hear the shouts of the victors and the dying groans of the vanquished—we would conclude that the emblems were not exaggerated, and that the picture was not overdrawn.

SUPPLEMENT TO LECTURE I.

Some objection may be raised to my interpreting the sixth chapter as applying to the fall of Jerusalem, on the ground that the Book of Revelation was written after Jerusalem had fallen, and it could not on that account be a matter of prophecy when John wrote. I am aware that some twenty-six years had passed since the fall of Jerusalem before the Revelation was written according to the best chronology. Yet this need not be any objection to my plan of interpreting the book. For I take it to be a symbolic history of the true church of God, with its many conflicts with its enemies, from the very beginning of Christianity to its final consummation. And therefore, John, in writing it, was set back, so to speak, to the beginning, and saw it all in the vision, and wrote it all as still being future at the time of writing.

LECTURE II.

This Lecture covers chapters seven and eight. Read them carefully before reading the Lecture.

The seventh chapter is a prelude to what follows to the end of chapter eleven, which closes the second section of the book of Revelation, as outlined in the Introduction.

We are now to consider the downfall of the second enemy of Christianity in its order, namely, the Roman Empire. This empire, especially in its pagan state, was, for several centuries, a bitter enemy of the kingdom of God, and persecuted Christianity with all its vast power. It seems strange at first that Rome should show such deadly hatred against the Christian religion, when it tolerated and protected every form of idolatry in existence. But the difficulty vanishes when we consider the fact, that the Evil One himself was the dominant moral as well as civil power in that mighty empire.

This is shown by reference to Luke 4:6: "And the devil said unto him, All this power will I give unto thee and the glory of them: for that is delivered unto me; and to whomsoever I will I give it." The devil here had shown Jesus in the temptation all the kingdoms of the world and the glory of them. Of course this was the Roman Empire, for that was called in those days the whole world. See Luke 2:1. "There went out a decree from Cæsar Augustus, that *all the world* should be taxed." Cæsar Augustus was at that time Emperor of Rome. And so, as all forms of idolatry are of the devil, it is not to be wondered at that he should be friendly to them, and persecute to the death the Christian religion, which was and is of God.

But we are to look now to the symbolism of the seventh chapter. But in order that the general reader may comprehend it all, we will have to prepare the way by giving certain historical facts. That part of the Roman Empire with which we are now concerned, covered all that part of southern and western Europe south of the Danube and west of the Rhine rivers. Beyond those rivers in the northern and eastern parts of Europe lived many nomadic tribes of people, whom the Romans called barbarians. These people were in the habit of roving about from place to place with their flocks and herds, wherever they could find pasture for their cattle or plunder for themselves. They had learned that in the more civilized provinces of southern Europe, where the people had cities and fields and vineyards, there were riches, that seemed wonderful to them, and which excited their cupidity. So they would attempt to make raids into those rich countries, now and then, to see and to enjoy better things than were to be had in their own country. But as long as the Roman people were virtuous and patriotic, they easily kept back these inroads of the barbarians by their well disciplined armies. But after Rome had become immensely rich she began to grow corrupt morally and weak civilly. And so the time soon came when she could not defend her vast boundaries against the many encroachments of these active warriors of the hardy North.

And the time had now about come when it pleased the God of heaven to destroy this mighty empire, which had so long imbrued its hands in the blood of the martyrs of Jesus. But before these dreadful invasions of the empire should begin, which were to devastate all southern Europe and apparently blot out civilization and Christianity, and thus bring on the Dark Ages, which were to enshroud

Europe for a thousand years in a pall of intellectual and religious darkness, God is represented as wishing to seal his elect both of Jews and Gentiles, so that the true church should not become extinct during these trying times.

Then John heard the number of those who were sealed of Israel, and it was a hundred and forty and four thousand. This is of course a definite for a large indefinite number. And it shows that there was even then a remnant of the dispersed Jewish people who should be saved. And this has been the case ever since, even to this present time, and will be till the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled, when all Israel will be saved, in the Millennial Age. Then John saw a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations and kindreds and tongues, which were to be saved during all these tumultuous times, when the church was in the wilderness, and when the Red Dragon and the Beast (see twelfth and thirteenth chapters) seemed to have everything their own way. Here is a fulfillment of the words of Christ in Matt. 16:18, "And upon this rock I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it."

The seventh chapter closes with a general display of those who were sealed and saved during the darkest ages of the world's history. They were said to be those who had come out of great tribulation, and had washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. They were clothed with white robes and had palms in their hands. Also John saw in this goodly company the living creatures and the elders, and vast multitudes of the holy angels, and they were all praising and adoring God the Father and the Lamb.

In the eighth chapter we have the opening of the seventh seal, and the beginning of the sounding of the seven trumpets. The terrible symbolisms in

this chapter display, in figurative language, the destruction of the Roman Empire in Europe and Africa, which event began about 250 A. D., and continued till 476 A. D., when the Western, or Latin Empire, became extinct. The barbarians then, who had conquered all the countries, divided the old empire into several different states or kingdoms pretty much as it is now. But we will have more on this point later on.

When the seventh seal was opened, it is said there was silence in heaven for half an hour, or a little season. I take this silence to refer to that period of the history of the empire which is known as the age of the Antonines. This period began about 138 A. D., soon after the final downfall of the Jewish nation, and lasted some less than a century. During this period the empire was governed by four or five good and virtuous emperors, two of whom bore the name of Antoninus. This may be termed the golden age of the empire, in which it reached its zenith of power and glory. During this age there was, so to speak, a lull in the general strife and turmoil that had characterized the years preceding, and Rome, under the sway of these rulers, was so strong that the barbarians, though impatient under the restraint, were not able to make any headway against her. But after these virtuous rulers had passed away, there arose a series of the worst and most corrupt emperors that ever cursed any people or nation, and, as a natural consequence, the government became so corrupt in all departments through luxury and voluptuousness, that the nation as a whole began to grow enervated and weakened. Thus the way was opened for the speedy fall of the empire through the inroads of the impatient barbarians, who were growing stronger in proportion as the Romans were growing weaker.

The general confusions and upheavings of these unsettled times are symbolized by the casting down of the censer to the earth by the angel, which caused, as it is said, voices, thunderings, lightnings, and an earthquake. These were premonitions of the coming storm which was to sweep over these devoted countries, carrying destruction and death in their pathway. In this censer we find again the prayers of saints, showing the power of the supplications of God's people in His general providences among men.

After the opening of this seventh seal, John saw the seven angels with seven trumpets, with which they were to sound the ushering in of the mighty invasions of the northern barbarians with all their dire consequences. The first trumpet being sounded, there follows a storm of hail and fire and blood. These affect the earth, or the land in general. The second trumpet reveals a great mountain burning with fire which was cast into the sea, and the third part of the sea was said to become blood. This trumpet, then, affects the sea. The third trumpet ushers in a star falling from heaven upon the rivers and fountains of water. This, then, was said to affect the streams and springs of water with the bitterness of wormwood. The fourth trumpet was said to have smitten the sun, moon and stars of heaven, so that they lost a third part of their light. Notice how similar these things are to the opening of the seals in the sixth chapter, and the pouring out of the vials in the sixteenth chapter. The sounding of these four trumpets, then, shows the universality of the calamities that fell upon those distressed countries. One is said to bring a curse upon the land, one upon the sea, one upon the streams and fountains of water, and one upon the heavenly bodies, denoting universality of destruction.

If I could I would give the reader an adequate conception of the dire ruin that was brought upon the people and countries of Southern Europe by these cruel and uncivilized barbarians of the North, who took great pleasure in plunder, murder and general devastation. Remember, these distressing times lasted something like two hundred years. The country, before these trying times, was populous. Cities, towns and villages filled many portions of the country. Beautiful farms and vineyards dotted the country along the many public highways. Civilization had reached a high degree for that age of the world of mankind. Churches and schools were numerous, and the people generally were comparatively prosperous and happy in their home life. But at the close of this period what a sad and desolate prospect greets the eye! The original inhabitants in a large measure were destroyed by war, famine and pestilence; the few remaining ones reduced to poverty and slavery; the country filled with the rough and unfeeling conquerors, who had no pity for the poor, distressed people; the cities, towns, villages and homes of a once happy people now in a large measure reduced to heaps of ruins. The bones of those who had been slaughtered or who had died from famine lay scattered all through the country. The schools were extinct, the churches pillaged, desecrated or burned. Dire ruin seemed to prevail everywhere. A traveler who passed through the northern part of Africa (for that, too, was a part of the Roman Empire, and was likewise invaded by these same barbarous people, who crossed over the Straits of Gibraltar) said that he traveled a whole day through that once populous country without seeing a single human being.

The result of the fourth trumpet was especially significant. It was said to smite the sun, moon and stars, so that the light was in part destroyed. Intellectually and morally this was truly the case, for these calamities, here so symbolized, did really bring on the Dark Ages, during which time the people groped in abject darkness both moral and intellectual; and this was made worse by the gross superstition that began about this time to be fastened on the people by their ignorant and wicked religious teachers. For in this period of mental darkness, when the people were ready to hear and believe anything strange or supernatural, it was the fittest time in the world's history for the "man of sin" to rise up and gain universal power over the minds and lives of men. But more of this later on.

LECTURE III.

*This Lecture covers chapters nine, ten and eleven.
Read them carefully and compare the Lecture
with them.*

As the second lecture pertained to the fall of the Western, or Latin, Empire, this has special reference to the final destruction of the Eastern, or Greek, Empire.

About the year 364 A. D., the once mighty Empire of Rome was divided into two parts, known afterwards as the Western and the Eastern empires. The former covered most of Southern Europe, except the Greek peninsula and Northern Africa, with the old city of Rome as its capital. The latter contained Southeastern Europe and all the Asiatic provinces of the old empire, and had Constantinople for its capital city.

The first of these was, as we have seen in Lecture two, finally destroyed about the year 476 A. D. But the latter continued to stand till 1453, when it, too, was blotted out of existence by the capture of Constantinople by the Turks.

It will be seen that the trumpets, under the seventh seal, cover the period during which God in His providence was bringing about the final ruin of the old Roman Empire, in its entirety, which, as we have seen, was the second deadly enemy which the church of Christ was to encounter.

The symbols in chapter nine give, in figurative language, a brief history of this period down to the year 1453. The tenth and eleventh chapters pertain to that period of the church's history from 1453 to the ushering in of the Millennial Age. But this last period is more graphically and more fully given later on, in chapters sixteen to nineteen inclusive. We are now living under the sixth trum-

pet of the seventh seal, if my interpretation is correct.

The ninth chapter opens with the fifth trumpet, and reveals a star falling from heaven, and to him was given the key of the bottomless pit. And when he had opened the pit, a dreadful smoke arose from it, and the sun and the air were darkened by reason of the smoke. And locusts were represented as coming out of the smoke upon the earth.

Now, this awful symbolism refers to the rise of the Mohammedan Empire in the East, which was at last the means of the downfall of the Eastern Roman Empire. The bottomless pit here means the vast, immeasurable source of all evil. Its being opened by permission from heaven shows that it was God's will, according to His eternal purposes, that this dreadful something should come upon the earth and fulfill its mission and then go into perdition.

It will be well to give here a short history of the rise and progress of this new empire, and new religion which it inculcated.

About the year 600 A. D. there appeared in Arabia a man by the name of Mohammed, who claimed to be a prophet, and who began to teach a sort of fanatical religious doctrine, though at first with small success. This new religion was made up of fragments of Judaism, Paganism, and Christianity, with a large mixture of pure diabolic imagination. At first he lived in Mecca, a city in Arabia, where he was born, in 570 A. D. But when he became over-persistent in trying to propagate his religious views, his townspeople became tired and disgusted, and so expelled him from the city. He then went to Medina, another city of Arabia. Here he had better success than at Mecca, and in about

two years returned to the latter city as a warrior at the head of 300 of his followers, and defeated an army of 950 Meccans. This he took to be a special sign that God was on his side, and thus fastened his religious views upon them at the point of the sword. In a few more years he was virtually king over all Arabia, and at the head of a victorious and fanatical army that soon became the terror of all the East. The chief tenet of his new religion was to propagate his faith by the sword. In verse ten it is said that he was to continue five months. This reduced to days is 150 days, or prophetic years. And sure enough, in about 150 years this new, self-made prophet and his successors, who took the name of Saracens, had overrun Syria, Persia, all the Holy Land, Egypt, all Northern Africa, and, in 710, landed in Spain, across the Straits of Gibraltar, and soon became masters of that also. It seemed then that all Southern Europe was doomed to be conquered by these terrible fanatics. But God said: "Thus far but no farther," and as soon as they had crossed the Pyrenees they were met at Poitiers by Charles Martel at the head of the Franks, and so awfully defeated that they were glad to get back into Spain again. This was the end of their career of conquest.

These armies of the Saracens were represented as locusts. This is a strong figure, as in the East nothing can be more dreadful than an army of locusts, which darken the sun in their flight, and cover the earth, and devour every green thing, so that it seems that a fire has burned up everything that grows on the land. But these armies, under the name of locusts, were not to hurt the grass or any green thing, but only the people. That is, they were not to destroy the countries which they conquered, as the barbarians had done in Europe, but torment the people by subjecting them to tyrannical rule.

nical civil treatment, and dreadful outrages, and, worst of all, compelling them to embrace their faith and system of religion by force. They were said to torment the people like scorpions. This is significant. The sting of the well-known eastern scorpion rarely ever kills, but it causes great pain, without either swelling or inflammation. So these Saracen armies made little or no change in the general aspect of things, but inflicted untold pain and grief of mind by compelling the people to submit to their demands, so that many doubtless felt like they would rather die than live.

Then the shapes of the locusts, or warriors, were said to be like horses prepared unto battle. That shows their armies to have been mostly cavalry, which was a fact. On their heads were apparently crowns of gold. This denoted the yellow turbans they wore on their heads. They had hair as women. History teaches that those Arabian warriors wore long hair. Lions' teeth denotes their tremendous power to frighten, devour and destroy whatever they chose. The breastplates denote their powerful armor and shields. Their wings represent their flowing robes fluttering and rustling as these horsemen rushed through the country or into battle. Their tails with stings refer to the dreadful consequences they left, so to speak, behind them in the countries which they conquered. The truth of this is yet seen in all those countries which they subdued, and upon which they fastened their baleful superstition known as Mohammedanism. The king over them is plainly the devil himself, who was permitted to be the leader of those terrible armies and the real author of that worst of all forms of false religion, which is even now fastened upon 250 millions of people on earth, and which is the bitterest enemy that the Christian

church has ever encountered, and is destined to be the most stubborn to overcome.

Thus we see that the Arabians, or Saracens, conquered nearly all the Eastern Empire in Asia, except a part of Asia Minor. And now we come to the sounding of the sixth trumpet, which brings to view another terrible scourge that seems to have swept down from central Asia around to the Caspian Sea and across the head waters of the Euphrates River.

This brings to our notice the invasions of the Tartars, Moguls, or Turks, who from the ninth to the fifteen centuries, made frequent invasions from Central and Western Asia into Southern Asia and Southeastern Europe, and carried consternation and terror into all those countries. These finally conquered Asia Minor and a large part of the Saracen Empire, and at last, in 1453, took Constantinople, the capital of the old Eastern Empire, and put an end to the last remnant of this second persecuting enemy of the church of God. They also adopted the Mohammedan faith as their religion, as the barbarians in Europe had adopted the Christian religion as their own. However, the Christian religion which the barbarians accepted was, as will be seen later, that corrupt form known as popery.

We now come to the symbolisms of this last part of the ninth chapter. The angel which had sounded the trumpet was told to loose the four angels which were bound in the river Euphrates. The great Euphrates River had for ages been the eastern boundary of the Roman Empire. These four angels bound in the river represent the enemies of the empire, who were appointed, at a moment's notice, to destroy it when the time should come. So they here really denote the Turks who, as soon as permitted, rush across the boundaries and soon carry terror and destruction into those once rich

countries, and carry a blight with them that still curses all those fair regions where the seven churches of Asia were located. I suppose their candles had all been removed on account of their corrupt doctrines and practices. And John said he saw the army of these terrible warriors who carried death and destruction to a large part of the people and the country, and it numbered two millions of horsemen. The awful imagery here depicted of breastplates of fire, jacinth, and brimstone, and of horses with heads of lions, out of whose mouths issued fire, smoke, and brimstone, by which a third part of the people were said to be killed, denotes that the terrors and sufferings of these stricken countries were fearful to contemplate. And it is further said that their power was in their mouths and their tails; and that their tails were like unto serpents, and had heads, with which they do hurt. These symbols remind us of the scorpions under the fifth trumpet, only they are more dreadful in their effects. For the suffering and distress, moral, social and civil, brought on the countries under Turkish rule were a great deal worse than anything the Saracens ever forced on any people, though that was bad, indeed.

This brings us to the final downfall of the Roman Empire. And yet it is said that the rest of the men who were not killed did not repent and turn away from their sinful ways. This signifies that the time of the coming of the kingdom of heaven, when the saints are to possess the earth, was not yet come.

We now come to the tenth chapter, which, with the eleventh, covers the period of the church's history from the fall of the Roman Empire to the beginning of the Millennial period.

The Dark Ages of the world's history, in which the nations of Europe especially were sunk in

gross darkness morally, civilly, politically, socially and religiously, lasted from about 500 A. D. till 1500 A. D. At the end of this period, or, as some have it, a little sooner, was the beginning of the Renaissance, or the revival of learning. This was brought about by several causes, the chief of which were: The intermingling of the people of Europe with those of the East during the age of the Crusades; the invention of the art of printing, by which books could be so multiplied as to enable all people to have them; and the capture of Constantinople by the Turks, when all the learned people of that ancient city left it under such dreadful conditions, and fled to the other parts of Europe where the Turks had no access. By these means light began to dawn on the minds of the people, and they were led by slow degrees to inquire after and seek more and more light along all lines, till at last the stirring events of the Reformation burst upon central Europe, the results of which, religious, social and civil, are still in progress with ever-increasing power and momentum, and will be till the sounding of the seventh trumpet, when the kingdoms of this world are to become the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ.

In the beginning of chapter ten a mighty angel comes down from heaven clothed with a cloud and a rainbow upon his head, having a face like the sun and feet as pillars of fire. He had a little book open in his hand, and he placed his right foot on the sea and his left foot on the land and, with a voice like that of a lion roaring, swore by him that liveth forever and ever, that time should be no more. But that in the days of the voice of the seventh angel, when he shall begin to sound, the mystery of God should be finished, as he had declared through his prophets.

This mighty angel, with his surroundings and accompaniments, seems to signify the blessed light that had now come upon the earth to stay and to grow brighter and brighter unto the perfect day of the world's glorious peace and happiness. For in this age, of which we are now writing, and which has been going on, already, according to our interpretation for several centuries, the light of God's truth in the Bible began to grow and spread among the people. And likewise a general knowledge of better things for the good of mankind began to be diffused gradually among all classes of people, which has within the past two centuries done so much for the amelioration of those nations in Europe and America which have been brought under its power. And this light and knowledge are spreading with ever-increasing power and rapidity to all the other nations of the world. The final outcome of all this is to be a Christian civilization, with Christian education, civil and religious liberty, and a complete brotherhood of mankind. Then the world will be prepared for the final coming of the kingdom, when, as Daniel says, 7:27: "The kingdom and dominion, and all the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven shall be given to the people of the saints of the most high, whose kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey him." And then the "knowledge of God shall cover the earth as the waters cover the sea."

The expression "time shall be no longer" does not mean that time shall end then, but that there will be no more time of waiting or delay. For, as we know, the good time here spoken of had been promised for many centuries, and it seemed that the time was delayed so long, while the enemies of the church and of all good seemed to continue to prevail, that God's people were often in their dis-

tresses discouraged and disheartened. But now this angel comes to renew their courage and their faith, and to enable them to feel like the time of the coming of the kingdom was almost in sight.

John is now commanded to take the little book in the hand of the angel and eat it up. He did so, and, as he was told, it was sweet in the eating but bitter as to the result. And he was told that he must prophesy again to many peoples, nations, tongues and kings. The sweetness and bitterness of the book have reference to the preaching of the gospel to all the world by John and his successors through all ages till the end of this period. The sweetness was to show that there was always to be a pleasure in preaching the gospel of salvation to the people. But the bitterness denoted that those who thus preached for the saving of the people were to be frequently subjected to great sufferings and perhaps death itself.

This brings us to the eleventh chapter, in which this same mighty angel who had the book and stood on sea and land, told John to measure the temple and the altar, and them that worship therein. This temple seems to denote the church in this period, especially in those countries where the preaching of the gospel is opposed, as it generally always is, when first introduced. The church here is represented as being small—so small as to be measured as a temple. But the court was not to be measured, as it was to be in the hands of the gentiles, or the opposition, and the holy city was to be trodden under foot for forty and two months. All this seems to refer especially to that part of the world which is now and has been for a long time under the sway of the cruel Mohammedans, who hate Christianity with a deadly hatred. The two witnesses must signify the written word and the preached word. For these are the two means by

which the gospel is always introduced and propagated. These were to prophesy or teach in sackcloth for 1260 days or years, the same as the forty and two months, during which time the holy city was to be trodden under foot. The sackcloth and ashes denote the cruel persecution to which they were subjected. These witnesses are here called the two olive trees, which is a plain reference to Zach. 4:3, where an olive tree is represented as furnishing oil to keep a lamp burning. And this figure, though simple and weak apparently, was to teach the mighty power that God had bestowed upon Zerubbabel to build the second temple, though opposed by seemingly overwhelming forces. And thus these witnesses, which seem weak and insignificant, are here, as elsewhere, the power of God unto the salvation of men and nations. And there is no power or opposition, how mighty soever it may appear to be, that can hinder the onward march of the white horse and his rider, or snatch the victory from his hands. The wonderful things here ascribed to the witnesses, of destroying their enemies by fire, and of having power to shut heaven, that it rain not, and of having power to turn waters into blood, and of bringing plagues upon people and nations, all plainly refer to the things done by Elijah and Moses through the power of God. And they here mean that the prayers of the righteous avail much, and that God will always interfere whenever it is for his glory and for the best interests of his church.

Now, in order to get a right understanding of that part of this eleventh chapter, where we are told that the witnesses were persecuted and killed when their work was finished, and that they lay unburied for three days and a half, while their enemies were rejoicing, and that they then rose and ascended to heaven, we must get a right view

of certain terms used. The forty and two months of witnessing, the 1260 days, or years, in which the gentiles were treading the holy city under foot, and the three days and a half when the witnesses lay unburied, a day standing for a year, all mean the same period of time. And we must remember that this 1260 days is a favorite period of time in Daniel as well as in Revelation, and that it does not always designate the very same time in the history of human events, but that it is rather an indefinite number of years, during which any particular persecution or trouble against the church was to last. Now it is said the beast, which is clearly the devil working through his various agents, as popery, Mohammedanism, idolatry, and other evil things, was to make war on the witnesses and kill them, when their work was finished. Well, this must be understood of each one of the martyrs who was put to death in all these times of persecution, after his individual work was finished. For we all ought to know that God's servants can never die in any way till their work is ended. And the lying unburied all this time is not to be taken literally, but denotes that their memory was dishonored and cast out as vile, which in ancient times was signified by want of burial. And the rejoicing of their persecutors and murderers plainly shows the attitude of the enemies of the church of God in all ages. And this is still really going on in some parts of the world even in this comparatively enlightened age. For, in many heathen, Catholic and Mohammedan lands, missionaries are now and then put to death. And this will doubtless be the case to some extent till all enemies are finally put down, as is indicated in the thirteenth verse of this chapter, and again in the closing verses of the nineteenth chapter. And this event is plainly referred to when we are told that the Spirit of life from God entered

into the witnesses and they lived again. This is more fully stated in the opening verses of the twentieth chapter, where we are told that the martyrs lived again. But this will be explained in the proper place. So we have now come to the closing scenes of this second section of the book of Revelation, in which the period of warfare between the church and its enemies of all kinds is drawing to a close. The rider on the white horse, who is now denominated King of kings and Lord of Lords, and who has a sharp sword with which he is to smite the nations (see 19:11-17) is preparing for the last final charge. The result of that charge is depicted in verse 13. "And the same hour there was a great earthquake, and the tenth part of the city fell, and in the earthquake were slain of men seven thousand; and the remnant were affrighted and gave glory to the God of heaven."

The seventh and last trumpet now sounds and the kingdoms of this world become the kingdoms of God and his Christ. Then follows a scene of rejoicing and praising God for his wonderful works, and for his taking to himself his great power and reigning over all his enemies and rewarding all his faithful servants.

LECTURE IV.

This will cover the twelfth and thirteenth chapters.

We now reach the third section of the book of Revelation. This section gives a symbolic history of the church in its contests with its ecclesiastical or spiritual enemies, instead of its civil enemies, as in the one just finished. It also takes us back again to the beginning of Christianity.

John saw a great wonder in heaven. A woman appeared clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet, and a crown of twelve stars upon her head. This woman symbolizes the kingdom of heaven, or the true church of Jesus Christ. Being clothed with the sun shows that she stood for the Sun of Righteousness, or the spiritual light of the world. The moon under her feet denotes that she is to be the greatest of all lights spiritual, as the sun in heaven is, to our world, the great light overruling all others. The twelve stars seem to symbolize the twelve apostles and their successors as her helpers and workers to the end of her earthly career. The man child that was born, who was to rule all nations with a rod of iron, is Jesus the Christ, who will in his own good time become King of kings. To rule with a rod of iron denotes strength, as iron is the strongest of all substances. The red dragon is none other than Satan, the great enemy of God and of all good. He appears here first as a dragon and a red dragon. The word dragon has always, and in all languages, conveyed the idea of a terrible and unnatural monster, which is frightful to behold. And as a red dragon it denotes Satan, as personified in the pagan Roman government. Red was the color of the clothing of the high officials, and this is still handed down to our day in some parts of the clothing of the high

ecclesiastics in the Roman Catholic church. This dragon was said to have seven heads and ten horns, and seven crowns upon his heads. These seven heads are explained in chapter 17:9 as signifying the seven hills on which Rome, the seat of the dragon's power, is built. The ten horns are also in 17:12, said to mean the ten kingdoms into which the Roman Empire in Europe was divided by the barbarians. The crowns upon his head seem to denote his full regal power over all the earth. And it is said that his tail drew the third part of the stars of heaven and did cast them to the earth. This I take to refer not only to the great and wicked work which Satan was represented here as doing, but also to his original state and fall. For it is certain that the devil and his evil angels were not created in their present fallen and wicked state. This would be inconsistent with the character and attributes of God who is supremely good, and it would also be contrary to the teachings of the Scriptures in many places, especially in Jude 6, which says: "And the angels which kept not their first estate, but left their own habitation, he hath reserved in everlasting chains of darkness unto the judgment of the great day." And the warfare here spoken of between Michael and Satan doubtless has reference to the same sad events. But all this in the twelfth chapter may be interpreted in another manner, as follows: Michael here is one of the faithful archangels and represents the power of good; Satan is a fallen archangel and represents evil. These two forces are here said to have waged a dreadful war in which Michael and his angels fought and the dragon and his angels fought in a battlefield unseen by mortal men, in which the victory was plainly on the side of the good. Did not something like this take place in the wilderness near the Dead Sea on a

certain occasion? The object of this battle was to see which should finally hold the supremacy of this world of mankind—God or Satan. The conflict was brief but terrible, and we have the certain promise of the happy result at “the end of the days.” Dan. 12:13. But it is God’s will that Satan and his angels shall be permitted to carry on his evil practices for a season. But he knows his time is short, and his wrath is proportionately great.

The newborn child was caught up to heaven unto God and his throne. The woman fled into the wilderness, where she had a place prepared of God, that she should be nourished a thousand two hundred and three score days. The dragon or Satan tried to destroy the plan of salvation in the early stages of its existence among men. The death of our Saviour was planned and attempted by Herod, one of Satan’s agents. After his baptism the whole scheme of redemption hung upon the issue of the temptations in the wilderness. The next attempt was to destroy his life during his ministry among the people. This was finally accomplished through the betrayal of Judas and the weakness of Pilate. But all this only fulfilled the Scriptures, and was one important step in the plan of redemption. After his death Satan tried to keep him dead and buried. But Roman guards and Satan’s power are alike impotent to thwart the purposes and plans of God. After his resurrection and ascension, then an effort was made through the Jewish Council to destroy the infant church. But when they had all done their worst, the church was only dispersed, which was the best thing that could be done for its life, preservation, and propagation. Thus all efforts to destroy the church through the wicked Jewish nation failed. And then Satan, as the red dragon, or pagan Roman power, his agent, went to

work to destroy the woman, or the true church in the wilderness. The church in the wilderness denotes its state or condition in those long ages of stern and cruel persecution. But, though pagan Rome did its best to crush out the church of Christ, it still grew and spread in every province throughout its vast dominions. And though thousands were put to death in all sorts of cruel ways, the blood of the martyrs, as one has so well said, was the seed of the church.

And it is said that the serpent or dragon cast out of his mouth water as a flood that the woman might be swallowed up and thus destroyed. Yet the earth helped the woman and swallowed up the flood which was intended to overwhelm the woman or the church of God. The flood of water here, which was said to proceed from the mouth of the dragon, signifies the false and corrupt doctrines which began to be propagated even before the death of the apostle John. These heretical teachings had their origin in the wicked one, and so were said to proceed from his mouth. They increased and spread more and more, until they finally became consolidated and incorporated into that awful system which has been known ever since as the Roman Catholic Church. Thus the devil hoped to destroy the true church by counterfeiting another which would swallow it up. But the earth helped the woman or the true church. This the earth, or the world of mankind, did by furnishing wicked men who took delight in corrupting the pure doctrines of Christianity and thus forming a church, as they called it, which would, as they vainly hoped, save them in their sins instead of from their sins. But this was only a sifting or separating of the wheat from the chaff. For the true Christians, who had been sealed, as we saw in a former chapter, were thus separated from the false

professors thereof; and they henceforth constituted the true church or woman in the wilderness, which was, all through the Dark Ages, persecuted by its wicked rival. And again the earth helped the woman by furnishing places of safety for true Christians, all through these dreadful times, in the fastnesses of her mountains and in her secluded valleys.

Thus the red dragon failed in his every effort to put down Christianity, under the Jewish rulers and under the pagan Roman Empire. And now we come to that time, which has been hinted at above, in which the devil as the red dragon, gave place to a terrible beast, and surrendered unto him his seat and his power especially to persecute the woman.

The beast that rose up out of the sea, in the thirteenth chapter, surely symbolizes the rise and continuance of that dreadful organization which was destined to curse the nations of mankind for so many ages. This is what Paul called the "man of sin," or "the son of perdition." And he said again that he could not come till he that let or hindered should be taken out of the way. II Thes. 2:7. The one letting, or hindering here, was the pagan Roman Empire. For it was impossible to establish a false, worldly church while pagan Rome was a persecuting power against everything called Christian, because people would not belong to an organization that subjected them to persecution and death, unless moved by a principle stronger than death; and this pure principle of loving obedience to God none can give but the Spirit of God in Christ Jesus himself. But when these false doctrines had made great headway among the people, it so turned out that a great emperor of pagan Rome, himself a pagan, suddenly declared himself an adherent of the Christian religion, and put down all pagan or idol worship; and this, of

course, made Christianity popular, especially among the upper classes of society, and soon a corrupt system grew up to suit the tastes and wishes of unregenerate and worldly men. And this was the rise of popery.

So, in the thirteenth chapter, a beast rose up out of the sea, having seven heads and ten horns, and upon his horns ten crowns. And this beast was like a leopard, having the feet of a bear, and his mouth was the mouth of a lion. And the red dragon gave him his power, his seat, and his great authority.

This beast is a symbolism of the Roman Catholic Church. The red dragon, or the devil, in the pagan Roman Empire, gave to this beast his power to persecute the true church, and his seat of power, which was the city of Rome, and his great authority over men and nations. His being like a leopard and bear and lion, all in one, shows his character which was so exceedingly bad that it combined the cruelty of the leopard, the savagery of the bear, and the bloodthirstiness of the lion. His seven heads and ten horns are identical with those of the dragon in the twelfth chapter. But the crowns upon the horns show that he was to have supreme power over those ten kingdoms into which the old Roman Empire in Europe was divided by the conquering barbarians, which history shows was a fact for many centuries. And this beast, or papal Rome, had one thing which the dragon did not have, and that was the names (as it reads in the margin) of blasphemy. This plainly refers to the many titles and names which are assumed or applied to the pope and to the church of Rome, or Roman Catholicism. Some of these may be here noted. The name pope originally means father. He claims to be the father to, or over, the church.

Jesus said: "Call no man father" in that sense. Then he is called the head of the church. The church has no head but Christ. Then he is said to be the vicar of Christ on earth. A vicar is one who takes the place of another and performs his duties or functions. How blasphemous to claim to be in Christ's place, and to be in possession of his power to act along certain lines! He claims also power to forgive sins, which none can do but God only. Infallibility is another one of his claims, by which is meant that the pope, in speaking as the head of the church in regard to what should be believed or practiced, can not err. Thus he sets himself up as God, and is the very embodiment of blasphemy itself.

Let us pause here for a while and consider what it is that this beast represented and still represents—which is Roman Catholicism. It is what Paul called the "falling away," and the "man of sin," and the "son of perdition." And in this last book of the Bible it is called "the mother of harlots and abominations of the earth." As a system of religion it had the devil as its founder, and lies as its foundation. It is in no sense the church of Christ, but is a counterfeit pure and simple. There is no truth in the whole thing. It is a system of lies from start to finish. It claims to have the apostle Peter as its first bishop, and to possess the power of the keys and other things, as given in Matt. 16. But all this Scripture is grossly misrepresented and made to mean things the Saviour never had in mind at all when he spoke those words to Peter. The word Peter means rock; and the Lord said on this rock, meaning Peter, he would build his church. But he meant not a real foundation, but an instrumental foundation. And this was fulfilled when Peter first preached to the Jews on the day of Pentecost, and to the gentiles at the house of Corne-

lius, on which occasions Peter laid the foundation of the church of Christ for both Jews and gentiles. And when he said that he would give to him the keys of the kingdom of heaven, he meant that he (Peter) should be the first to open the kingdom of heaven to both Jews and gentiles, which was fulfilled on the occasions mentioned above. And then the Saviour said again that whatsoever Peter should bind on earth should be bound in heaven. But these same words were spoken to all the apostles on another occasion, and simply meant that he would so endue them by the Holy Spirit that in establishing his church on earth and in teaching his pure doctrines and ordinances, they should not make any mistakes. This is what is meant by the inspiration of the Spirit in writing for us the New Testament as it came down to us. The pope, however, claims to have that same inspiration yet along these same lines.

But so far as the church in Rome is concerned, Peter never had anything to do with it. The Catholics say that he was its first bishop or pastor. But the truth is, so far as the evidence goes, Peter never saw Rome at all, and so had no connection with the matter. All these claims concerning the Apostle Peter are pure fiction and nothing else.

But we now return to the beast, of whom it is said in verse three, that one of his heads was wounded as it were to death, but that it was afterwards healed, and that all the world wondered after the beast.

This verse has caused much perplexity and given rise to many speculations and interpretations. The one, however, which the author of these Lectures assumes to be the true one, is both simple and natural. We have already seen in a former Lecture that the barbarians who conquered the

Roman Empire in Europe were heathen, and it looked like the whole of Christianity, root and branch, would be blotted out of existence. But strange to say, after reducing the people to the most abject state of vassalage, they then accepted the religion of the conquered people. So my interpretation is this: The deadly wound had reference to the low estate of the dominant church in those countries at that time, which was Romanism, and the healing was the conversion of the barbarians themselves. And all the world wondered after the beast. After the conversion of the barbarians to that form of Christianity which they found, namely, Romanism, they became devoted followers of the pope, and were strictly obedient to all his demands. So that made the way easy for the pope to fasten on the new kingdoms, which they set up, all the chains of ecclesiastical slavery and superstition that cursed those nations so long, and from whose galling bonds many of them have not yet recovered. And it is said they worshiped the dragon which gave power to the beast, and they worshiped the beast. Yes, they worshiped anything but God. For Catholicism is idolatry pure and simple. With all their pomp and ceremony their worship is the worst form of idolatry. And there was given him a mouth speaking great things and blasphemies, and he was to continue forty and two months, or 1260 years. These great things and blasphemies signify the monstrous things the people were taught and led to believe and trust in. The pope taught them that he was in God's place, and had power over men's souls and bodies in time and in eternity. So he opened his mouth against God to blaspheme his name and his tabernacle and them which dwell therein. And now comes the most awful thing of all. Power was given unto him to make war with the saints, that is, the

woman in the wilderness or the true church of God, and to overcome them. And it is a fact that this organization, which professed to be the church of Jesus Christ, killed more of his true followers than pagan Rome itself.

But finally it is said of this beast that he that killeth with the sword shall be killed with the sword, and he that leadeth into captivity shall go into captivity. So the beast will at last be compelled to go into perdition. This is to be accomplished by the faith and the patience of the saints, or the true church.

We now come to the second beast which was said to rise out of the earth, and had two horns like a lamb, but spake as a dragon. The first beast rose out of the sea. The word sea here means nations and peoples. For Catholicism rose from the corrupt doctrines that had been disseminated generally among the people of all those countries. This second beast rose out of the earth, denoting his low and vile origin. He sprang from this sinful and sin-cursed earth, not from heaven. The two horns as a lamb show his deceitful humility and piety; a lamb outwardly, a dragon inwardly. Claiming to be of God, he was not only of the devil, but the devil himself as to his character and work.

This is shown by his blasphemous speech. He spake as a dragon. He, it is said, exerciseth all the power of the first beast, or the Roman Catholic Church, and causeth the earth and them that dwell in it to worship the first beast whose deadly wound was healed. That is, this second beast intensified the bonds of spiritual slavery over the people, and riveted its chains upon them.

Now the question arises, what is signified by this second beast? It is not Catholicism itself, but rather an arm of it, by which its power, to wage

war against the saints, or the true church, was immensely multiplied.

When the pope of Rome found that he could not suppress heresy, as he called true Christianity, by the power of his corrupt church alone, he devised means to get the several civil governments, or kingdoms, to make laws according to his wishes, in order the more effectually to kill out all the true Christians in the whole world and thus gain the final victory over God and his Christ. And all the civil governments, sure enough, passed laws of the pope's dictating, making it a serious misdemeanor for men, women and children to presume to worship contrary to the false and wicked doctrines of Catholicism, and these laws required the most dreadful punishments imaginable to be inflicted on any who should presume to violate them in the least degree. So, when the church authorities accused a person of heresy, he was handed over to the civil authorities to be punished.

And now we are prepared to define this second beast. It was a union of the ecclesiastical and the civil powers in waging a war of extermination against the woman, or the real church of Jesus Christ in the wilderness.

Under this beast, or vast persecuting power, papal Rome reached the height of her infamous glory and of her iniquity. She rode roughshod over the heads of kings, potentates, and all civil powers. She employed spies to ferret out any and all who were even suspected of entertaining opinions contrary to her teachings, and to find out any hiding places where they might hold their meetings. And on some occasions, when a community was found where Christians had been permitted to live and multiply by some indulgent lower civil officer, a crusade was raised of the worst cut-throats and criminals that could be mustered and

sent to that place, and the whole population was either murdered or dispersed to the four winds of heaven. Under this beast also was organized the bloody Inquisition, by which some parts of Europe, especially the Netherlands and Spain, were cursed for several centuries with such proceedings as would make the blood run cold to hear them related now in all their horrors. A bull fight in Spain in these days seems shocking to us, especially when we are told that all classes of people, men and women of high rank, gather to witness and applaud scenes that would cause ladies in this country to faint at the sight of. But this is almost nothing when compared to the *auto-de-fé*, as they called it, when multitudes gathered to see a number of Christians of both sexes tied to stakes and burned alive. These awful spectacles were considered by these misguided people under the power of the beast as acts of worship with which God was much pleased. It is said that in Spain alone 341,000 Christians suffered in this dreadful manner, and perhaps as many more suffered in the Netherlands, which were in those days under Spanish rule. Such cruel proceedings as these lasted from 1481 to 1813, when they were put an end to by Napoleon Bonaparte, and poor Spain is under a curse today from which she will never recover until she throws off the yoke of the pope and repudiates all the marks of the beast.

As to the signs and wonders that were said to be done by or through the beast, I will simply say that all this was an imposition on the ignorant and deluded people. For instance, they had what they called relics. These were a piece of wood, perhaps, which they made the people believe to be a part of the cross on which Jesus died. Or it would be a piece of a bone, or a little bit of hair, or something which they claimed to have been a part of some

noted saint, as Peter or Paul, or to have belonged to some great saint of a later date. And the people were told that numbers had been cured of sickness by visiting the holy places where these things were kept, and by looking upon them. And it is said that none could buy or sell who did not have the mark of the beast or the number of his name. History shows that this was literally true at certain times and in some countries. Men were allowed no privileges who were not outspoken Catholics, and who were not willing to do the pope's bidding on all occasions, no matter what it might be.

And now we come to consider his name, or the number of his name. This seems to have been given here for future readers of the book of Revelation to be able to designate what particular power this beast represented. We are told to count the number of the beast, which is the number of a man and that the number is 666.

In the Latin language certain letters stood for certain numbers, as V, five; X, ten, and so on. Now, what name can we find that designates both a man, or his title, and a persecuting power against the true church? It has been suggested that the name "Vicar of the Son of God," which is one of the names borne by the pope of Rome, fills the bill exactly, and I accept it here as the best I know of. In Latin it is thus: Vicarius Filii Dei. Now, let us see how this will do, remembering that in old Latin u was equal to v:

V =	5	I =	50
i =	1	i =	1
c =	100	i =	1
i =	1	D =	500
u =	5	i =	1
i =	1		
		Total,	666

It has been said that this name is written on the tiara, or crown of the pope of Rome. And as he

was a man, and at the same time represented that great persecuting power of which we have been writing, it seems doubly sure that we have the correct solution of the problem.

LECTURE V.

THE VIALS OR THE LAST PLAGUES.

This Lecture covers chapters fourteen, fifteen and sixteen. In the seventh chapter, at the beginning of the long period of Roman persecution, we had the sealing of the elect, who were to be saved during those unhappy times when the church was in the wilderness and the beasts, her enemies, seemed to have everything their own way. Now, here, in the fifteenth chapter, we arrive at the close of the Dark Ages, and consequently the close of the worst of Rome's ascendancy, civil and religious; and, as a fitting prelude to what we are to have in the coming chapters, we are shown the Lamb standing on Mount Zion with a hundred and forty and four thousand, having his Father's name written on their foreheads. And the noise of their shouting was as the noise of many waters and of a great thunder. And there were harpers harping with their harps. And they were singing a new song that none knew but the redeemed. These were said to be virgins, that is, persons who were not defiled with Rome's idolatry. For, in the Bible, idol worship is spiritual adultery. These are, of course, the same as the sealed in the seventh chapter. They are now with the Lamb in heaven. They are said to be the first fruits of the great harvest that is to come in the next period, which we are now entering in this Lecture, and in which we are now living in this twentieth century.

In verse six we have these words: "And I saw another angel flying in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation and kindred and tongue." Of course, this reveals the beginning of the period of gospel expansion, as well

as of the increasing knowledge in general that was set in motion by the great reformation in Europe in the sixteenth century. This movement, known as the Reformation, was the result of various causes. Among these some have been mentioned already in a former Lecture as the revival of learning and the invention of printing. But that which may be called the immediate cause was the pope's outrageous proceedings, especially in the selling of indulgences. In the beginning of the sixteenth century this practice had reached such a monstrous and shameful height that it caused Martin Luther, though a Catholic himself, to call a halt to such high-handed proceedings. And that was the first step in the great reformation which followed, and whose results are destined to bring about the final death of popery, as well as all the other enemies of the true church of God.

But a word of explanation in regard to indulgences may here be proper. In the Catholic church many inventions were gotten up to suit the wishes of those in authority, and especially to bring money into the coffers of the church. Among these (and they were almost numberless) was one that they called indulgence. In the early years of the Romish church, punishments were inflicted on members who were guilty of certain sins, before the priests could forgive them. These punishments were called "penances." Later these penances could be remitted by paying a fine for the benefit of the church, or by doing some work which the church would accept in place of punishment. This paying or doing something was called "indulgence." Later still, in the early years of the sixteenth century, the pope extended these indulgences to cover sins not yet committed, as well as to sins already committed. So men could buy the forgiveness of any and all sins by paying so much

money into the church treasury. Martin Luther met with one who was peddling these indulgences among the ignorant and superstitious people, and was so disgusted and indignant that he began to call these and some others of the church's practices to the attention of thinking people, and this was the beginning of the Reformation.

So this fourteenth chapter ushers in the time when the gospel could be preached freely among the people, and the Bible could be printed in all tongues and read by all people. This was a great change from what had been the custom for over 1200 years, for during all those years the Bible was suppressed, and none were allowed to preach the gospel openly among the people. Persecution and death awaited all who dared even speak against the church of Rome, or to call in question any of her acts. But now it was all beginning to be different. Under the new spirit that now began to move men's minds, they went so far even as not only to call in question some of the pope's teachings, but to defy his power. And, at last, to his great grief, the pope of Rome found himself unable to punish a man who openly opposed him. For, in the case of Luther, when the pope would condemn him and his teachings, the paper containing this condemnation, instead of being executed, as such papers had been before for a thousand years, was taken by Luther and his friends and publicly burned in the streets of the city. Thus the pope was defied and he could not help himself. This was the first fatal blow popery had ever received and from which she will never recover.

So now another angel follows the first, who went flying through the air with the everlasting gospel to preach, and this second angel said: "Babylon is fallen, is fallen!" This did not, of course, mean that Babylon, or Rome, was become extinct, but

that she had received her death blow and would die and go into perdition in due time. Rome, or the Romish church, is here called Babylon. This is because in olden times the city of Babylon was the worst enemy Israel had. Nebuchadnezzar, the king of Babylon, took and destroyed the city of Jerusalem and carried the Jews away to Babylon as prisoners, where they had to remain seventy years. So now, as Rome was the chief enemy of the church, which is the true Israel, we find her called by that same name.

Then a third angel follows, calling attention to the heavy condemnation and punishment that awaited those who should continue under the circumstances to believe in and obey the wicked teachings of the pope and his church. For before this the people generally were in a measure excusable, as they had no opportunity generally to know anything but the lying superstitions of Rome. They were brought up to look upon the Bible as a dangerous book, and to hate any who were of the true church as accursed heretics. So, under these conditions they were really to be pitied. But now, in the times of which we are writing, it was different. The gross errors of Rome were exposed, and her many false teachings and corruptions were laid bare, and the Bible was printed in their mother tongue, and the true gospel was being preached publicly, and therefore there was no excuse for those who still held on to the pope and his errors.

We now come to the white cloud in this fourteenth chapter, and the one like the Son of Man sitting thereon, having a golden crown on his head and a sharp sickle in his hand. And soon another angel appears with another sharp sickle, and they both are told to thrust in their sickles and reap the earth. And the earth was reaped in the vision, and the clusters of the vine of the earth were cast

into the winepress of the wrath of God and trodden or crushed. Now what do these symbolisms represent in the history of the church of God and of mankind? In answering this question, we must remember that the fulfillment of these prophecies is now going on and will go on with increasing power, till the Millennial period shall arrive. And remember, too, that these same things are again given under different symbolisms in the latter half of the nineteenth chapter.

The one on the white cloud signifies Christ going forth in the power of his Holy Spirit, conquering and to conquer. The angels in the vision represent his co-workers, the ministers of the gospel, and all other laborers in his kingdom, great and small. But what are we to understand by the harvest of the earth, the vine, and the clusters of the vine? These must denote all the sinful or evil things—moral, civil, social, and religious—that hinder the coming of the kingdom of heaven in its full glory and power. But we have here two sickles and two reapers. What are we to understand by these things? The one on the white cloud signified the principal or most important reaper, and of course that part of the harvest which he reaped was the most important. Well, now, let us divide the harvest into two parts, as follows: the first includes the evil things of the world which are strictly religious or spiritual; the second, then, must include those which relate to civil and social evils, which are subordinate to the strictly religious ones.

So, then, through the power of the word of God preached and propagated among all nations and peoples, all erroneous religious systems by which mankind are deluded and spiritually ruined are to be reaped, or taken out of the way and cast into the winepress of the wrath of God, which is perdi-

tion. Then, as a consequence, all bad systems of government among men will disappear, and all social and political abuses will likewise be reaped or cast into perdition. The last verse in this fourteenth chapter is strong, figurative language, in keeping with the symbolisms of the sickles, the grapes, and the reapers, and it conveys an idea of the stupendous amount of the evil things crushed out of existence.

We now reach chapter fifteen, which is a sort of preface to the sixteenth. John saw another great sign in heaven, the seven angels having the seven last plagues, which are to close up God's work of preparing the way for the coming of his kingdom in the Millennial Age. The seven vials of wrath, which this chapter introduces, constitute another way of expressing the same things as were expressed, under different symbolisms, in the reappings of the fourteenth chapter. Only in that chapter the reappings referred both to religious and other evils, whereas the vials of wrath have special reference to Roman Catholicism and its kindred evils, and its effects on mankind and on the nations of the earth. And John saw, also, a sea of glass, as it were, mingled with fire, and on this sea those who had gotten the victory over the beast and his image, having the harps of God. These, of course, are the same as the hundred and forty and four thousand in the last chapter with the Lamb on Mount Zion. And they sang the praises of God, and magnified him for the great and marvelous works which he had done. Then John saw the temple of the tabernacle of testimony in heaven open. And seven angels came out of the temple clothed in white and girded with golden girdles, having the seven last plagues. And one of the four living creatures gave unto the seven angels seven golden vials full of the wrath of God Almighty.

And the temple was filled with smoke from the glory of God and his power. And no one could enter the temple till the seven last plagues were fulfilled. This last indicates that no one might enter the temple to intercede for the people concerned and pray that these last plagues might not be sent upon the earth.

The sixteenth chapter is the chapter of the plagues. The reader will doubtless notice the similarity of the vials in this chapter and the trumpets in eighth, ninth, tenth and eleventh chapters. But we must remember that the calamities which followed the sounding of the trumpets were real and natural. They were destructions of nations and the lives of people, and of towns and cities and civil institutions. But the results of the vials refer to the destructions of religious, moral, civil, and political evils, such as Romanism, Mohammedanism, heathenism, infidelity, and, indeed, all errors in religious belief and teaching, and likewise all social and moral evils. The trumpets introduce real wars and all their calamities. The vials introduce bloodless wars on evil institutions.

And there came a great voice out of the temple bidding the seven angels to go forth and pour out their vials upon the earth. The first poured out his vial upon the earth, that is, that part of the earth occupied by popery. And there fell upon the people who had the mark of the beast a noisome and grievous sore. Now, this is not to be understood as real sores on their flesh, but rather mental sores and pains, that gave much trouble and anxiety, especially to the leaders of the Romish church. This began to be fulfilled in the beginning of the Reformation period, when the pope saw and felt that his power and influence over nations, kings, and people were growing weaker. And, of course, by these signs of the times, he saw clearly that un-

less something could be done to prevent it, his bad glory would depart from him, and he would be humbled to the dust. This hurt his proud spirit worse than sores could have hurt his body. For over a thousand years this beast, or anti-Christ, had possessed and wielded almost unlimited sway over the bodies and souls of the people of all so-called Christian nations. The pope and the church were honored and obeyed without question by kings and their subjects. But now matters were changing, and they kept on changing more and more rapidly, and so the pope lost first one thing and then another, and one nation and then another slipped out of his hands, and left him in his impotent wrath to grieve over his internal sores. And these changes are still going on as the light of pure Christianity shines more and more in Catholic countries, and the eyes of the people are opened to see more plainly the errors of the Romish beast. Thus the pride of Rome is being humbled, her once vast power is surely slipping out of her hands, and, though she tries hard to prevent it, her true character, as the mother of harlots and abominations of the earth, is daily becoming more and more apparent. And thus the nations are getting ready, in a summary manner, to "eat her flesh and burn her with fire." 17:16.

And the second angel poured out his vial on the sea, and the sea was turned into blood, and everything in the sea died. The sea seems to be inimical to the Romish church. They have tried again and again to spread their doctrines by means of the sea into distant lands. At first they seemed to have right much success in the New World and in the islands of the ocean. But for a long time now it has been almost useless to plant Catholicism in new fields, either heathen or Mohammedan; and those in the New World are fast outgrowing its

effete system of gross superstition. And it is a fact that the strongest nations today on the sea are not Catholic, but Protestant nations. Time was when Spain was apparently the mistress of the seas. But she had to yield the palm to Protestant England. And to-day Spain, the rankest Catholic power on earth, is almost helpless so far as her naval power is concerned.

The third angel poured out his vial on the rivers and fountains of waters, and they likewise became blood.

Rivers and fountains are the means and sources of the fertility and riches of a country. If these are turned to blood, or destroyed, then the country becomes, so to speak, a desert, and is incapable of sustaining life. So this vial shows that the many sources and means of nourishing and strengthening Romanism in the world are failing and leaving the poor old pope an almost helpless prisoner in the Vatican. There to-day he, like an aristocratic family divested of all real wealth and power, vainly tries to keep up a show of his former grandeur and respectability. But his poverty and weakness are too plainly seen, and the real intelligence of the world to-day is laughing at the thin varnish and veneering that are used to hide the real situation. Kings used to crave his blessing, or tremble at his frown. But now they know too well he has no blessing to give, and as to his frown, they recognize that to be the result of his inward chagrin and impotent wrath. Thus God is judging and rewarding this old persecuting enemy of all good by giving him, so to speak, blood to drink. This is just and right, since he has shed rivers of the blood of the saints.

And the fourth angel poured out his vial upon the sun, and power was given unto him to scorch men with fire. The sun is the source of light and

heat. When the light and heat thereof are normal, then men see the light and feel the heat with pleasure. But when these are in an abnormal condition—too much or too little—men are uncomfortable and have to suffer more or less. Now, in this vial we have a symbolism of too much light. So now we have the interpretation. Rome, like the owl, glories in darkness. Light is just what she don't want. And great light, as this vial reveals, to her is like glaring light and burning heat to the green grass of the field. It is simply death to either. The more of the darkness of ignorance and gross superstition, the more Romanism can flourish. For Rome to flourish and live, the Bible must be suppressed or perverted, schools must be restricted to their own teachers and dogmas. The real light must not shine. The real truth must be withheld or covered up with the rubbish of the pope's erroneous teachings. For Rome and her doctrines to flourish, the people must be kept not only in spiritual darkness, but in civil darkness also. Liberty, civil or religious, can never be tolerated by the pope and his church. Neither can they live long where either or both prevail.

So, then, the teaching of this vial is that so much light has come into the religious, moral, and civil world, that those men who are of the pope's party are, as it were, scorched with heat, and are led to blaspheme God and his light of truth. For it is the truth after all that burns and kills Romanism.

The fifth angel poured out his vial on the seat of the beast, and his kingdom was full of darkness, and they blasphemed God and repented not of their evil deeds.

The seat of the beast must mean the city of Rome. Or it may be Italy in general. Or still more particularly, it may refer to the states of the church. This was a part of Italy containing the

city of Rome, over which the pope ruled as a sort of king. This portion of Italy was his special dominion from about the middle of the eighth century till the year 1870, when Victor Emmanuel united all Italy in one kingdom and made Rome his capital city, and thus divested the pope of all his civil possessions and confined him to his ecclesiastical duties. Of course, this was a severe blow to the pope and to popery. His kingdom, so to speak, was full of darkness. His wrath was extreme but useless. He could not help himself in the least particular. He blasphemed and cursed, no doubt, but to no purpose. Thus the mental pains and sores of the beast and his followers became more and more aggravated. And as the true light shines more brightly year after year in his kingdom, it only reveals to him the blackness and darkness of that perdition which is surely coming upon him and his evil designs. No wonder he gnaws his tongue in his impotent rage and blasphemes the God of truth and light.

The sixth angel poured out his vial upon the great river Euphrates, and the water thereof was dried up so that the way of the kings of the East might be prepared.

For many centuries the Euphrates River was the eastern boundary of the great civil Roman Empire in Asia, as the Danube and Rhine rivers were on the north and west in Europe. So here this same river is spoken of as a symbolic boundary between the kingdom of the beast and the kingdom of God, or, in other words, between the Catholic and Protestant powers of the world. But what are we to understand by the kings of the East? At this day and time there seems to be nothing east of the Euphrates River that promises anything to assist in breaking down the powers of the Romish church. For on the east of that river now we find

the nearest countries under the baleful influence of the false prophet Mohammed, as in Persia and Hindoostan. Further on in India we find gross heathenism with a sprinkle of real Christianity. But in this small bit of Christianity, first introduced by Carey and Judson and others, and now nourished by the power of Protestant England, whose dominion seems to be destined to revolutionize the vast Indian Empire, there may be a seed to solve the problem. But a certain poet has said "Westward the course of empire takes its way," and this has always been true. For, civilly speaking, the first great empire was the Babylonian on the Euphrates River. The next was the Medo-Persian, which extended a little further west. Then followed the Grecian under Alexander the Great. This extended still further west. Then followed the Roman, which extended westward to the Atlantic Ocean, which seemed then to be the utmost limit of the world in that direction. But after a while this Roman Empire was broken up into ten kingdoms, as it is expressed in the book of Revelation. One of these kingdoms is England. And in course of time Protestant colonies left England and founded our great American empire or republic, still farther west. And this is "Time's noblest offspring," as the poet has it. Well, this great nation of ours, now the seat of the purest Christianity the world has ever seen since the apostolic days, has extended across this continent to the mighty Pacific Ocean, and her benign influence, both moral, civil and religious, is crossing over the great ocean, westward still, and is touching the hitherto benighted nations of Eastern Asia. Japan for a long time shut her doors against the world. But American artillery shattered those gates to atoms, and compelled the Sunrise Kingdom to become a civil neighbor and admit the blessings

of Western civilization. And old conservative China, the Celestial Empire, as she calls herself, has at last begun to pluck the beam out of her own eye, and to be able to see clearly that there are some better things in the world than her long cherished ideals, civil and religious. And now we begin to see how the symbolism of this sixth vial is to cross the continent of Asia and cross the Euphrates River and pass over to Catholic Europe, and thus be the final death of the beast of Rome and the false prophet Mohammed, as well as the many phases of idolatry in other parts of the world. Modern missions, coupled with Christian education and backed by civil and religious liberty, are the means that are to break down all bars and gates and ride triumphant over all opposition to that victory which is the hope of a world groaning in darkness and in tyranny.

But now we come to the symbolic frogs that were said to be the spirits of devils proceeding out of the mouth of the dragon, the beast, and the false prophet. And these evil spirits were said to go to all the kings of the whole world to gather them together to the battle of God Almighty. These spirits, or frogs, represent the combined powers of popery, Mohammedanism, idolatry, infidelity, and of every other evil principle in this sin-cursed world of ours, to make a last stand against the encroachments of pure Christianity and all it stands for, against their dark kingdom. This is a repetition of the reapings in the fourteenth chapter, and the great battle in the last half of the nineteenth, though under different symbolisms.

And the seventh angel poured out his vial in the air, and a great voice from heaven said: "It is done." That is, the blessed result of the efforts then set in motion and then going on were so sure that it was said to be already done. Those things

may be thus summed up, speaking in present time. Pure Christianity is now spreading more and more rapidly every year, and the time can not be very distant when there will be a combination of all its enemies, under the instigation of the evil one and all his co-workers, to crush out and finally destroy God's kingdom in the world. But as this is all future, we can not know all the proceedings. But as to the result there can be no doubt. It will be a battle royal, a terrible Waterloo, with rage on the one hand and infinite power on the other. And it will doubtless justify all the awful symbolisms given in Revelation to give an idea thereof. And the rumblings of this coming storm may be even now both seen and felt, if not heard. Why is Romanism so intent to get as much power as possible in these United States? Why does she, by flattery and cunning in every conceivable manner, try so hard to banish the Bible from the public schools, to gain control as far as possible of our large cities, and to get possession of our government? It is because she knows that our free institutions and pure Christianity are destined, if not prevented, to finally destroy her power among men, which is founded on nothing but the lying devices of Satan himself. And again, why do the followers of the false prophet Mohammed work so hard to keep every semblance of Christianity out of their countries, and to get as much foothold as possible in the newly opened continent of Africa? It is to keep the true light away from the people, and so to preserve their errors and superstitions as a cloud of darkness over the people. And again, why should such an intelligent people as the French rush into infidelity, when Romanism had insulted their common sense by her absurdities? It is because Satan, the great dragon, had so well succeeded under popery in excluding pure Chris-

tianity from France, by the crusades against them at one time in the south of that country, and by that almost unpardonable massacre of Bartholomew at another time. So now, as France knows no church but Rome, and as she sees that to be rotten to the core, she swings off to the other extreme of infidelity, if not atheism.

Then why should so many of the so-called wise men of our day attack the Bible in one way or another? Why so much higher criticism? Why so many open or covert attempts to destroy the old book? It is because the enemy of God and man knows that if the Bible continues to live and to be believed, his kingdom can not stand. So everything is being done that can be done to down him who rides on the white horse, whose name is "The Word of God," and "King of Kings," and "Lord of Lords."

LECTURE VI.

This Lecture covers chapters seventeen, eighteen and nineteen.

Chapter seventeen gives explanations only. The last chapter had brought the history of the true church down to that time when Rome or Babylon was fallen, and now, in the seventeenth, one of the angels who had the seven vials of wrath proposes to show John the great harlot, which, of course, is the Roman Catholic church. The symbolisms here used can be applied with all ease to popery, but to nothing else. So there seems to be no doubt at all of the correctness of our interpretation.

The angel carried John away into the wilderness, where he saw a woman sitting on a scarlet colored beast. This beast was full of names of blasphemy, and had seven heads and ten horns. And the woman was arrayed in purple and scarlet color, and decked with gold and precious stones. And upon her forehead was a name written: "Mystery, Babylon the great, the mother of harlots and abominations of the earth." The woman was also represented as drunken with the blood of saints and of the martyrs of Jesus. And now the angel proposes to show him what these things mean, or what these symbols represent. First, then, what is meant by this woman? In chapter twelve we saw a woman clothed with the sun, and with the moon under her feet, etc. This woman was a glorious representation of the true church of God. And here this gaudy, drunken woman must represent the corrupt church of Rome, or, more correctly, of the devil. For we have already seen that the father of lies is its author. The character and the names of this woman are exactly in keeping with the church of Rome. "Mystery!" She is, indeed, a mystery,

and a mystery of iniquity. Her deep hypocrisy, blended with the highest claims of piety, is a mystery that can't be unraveled. Her infallibility and her other godlike powers and attributes, existing in a poor, weak, sinful man, and that man not even a regenerate man, constitute a mystery indeed. "Babylon the great." We have seen in a former chapter that Babylon was the worst enemy that the ancient Jewish people ever had to encounter. And here the name is given to Rome, or Rome's ecclesiastical power, showing that she is now the worst and the most cruel enemy of the true church, which is the real Israel. "Mother of harlots and abominations." Harlotry or adultery is, in a spiritual sense, idolatry. And we all know that Rome, meaning the church of Rome, is the mother of idol worship, so far as Christianity is concerned. No other people who claim to be Christians in any sense have ever invented a system of idolatry in place of the true worship of God. But Rome worships the virgin mother of Jesus and prays to her, instead of Jesus himself. She also worships a multitude of saints, and expects more good from them than from God himself. She worships relics which claim to be parts of some holy person, or to have been in some way connected with a saint or the Saviour himself. But these are all mere fabrications, and are as real idols as any that ever were bowed down to by the heathen in their temples. And as to the abominations committed by Rome there is hardly any end to them, either in number or in the magnitude of their heinousness. The day of judgment only can reveal the awful abominations she has palmed off as holy teachings, which the poor, ignorant people believe, and on which dry chaff their poor souls feed and die. And oh, the abominations of their confessionals and their nunneries! Could the betrayals of con-

fidence, the seductions, the adulteries, the rapes, the infanticides, and the murders connected with these institutions be told in all their blackness of horrors, the worst Turk on earth would stand aghast at the tale. Yes, she is the mother of the abominations of the earth, religious, social and political. Like produces like. The woman herself is an abomination and she can produce nothing else. If she ever does a good thing, it is, you may be sure, done with bad and selfish motives. In the last verse we are told that the woman is the city of Rome itself. But of course the city of Rome is taken here to mean not only the city itself, but the ecclesiastical power of which the city is the seat.

Now what is the beast? This means, of course, the same as the red dragon in the twelfth chapter and the first beast in the thirteenth. And that is Rome as a government, both civil and ecclesiastical. As a civil government Rome, the red dragon persecuted the true church till she was destroyed; and then the beast took the seat and authority of the dragon, and continued the persecution against the true church with increased malice and cruelty. In verse eight we are told that he was and is not and yet is. It was at first as the red dragon, that is, the pagan Roman Empire. When that was subverted then it was not, that is, the pagan Roman empire was not. But when that counterfeit church of Rome was invented, then it was again in the beast of the thirteenth chapter, the same as here mentioned. This beast and all he represents ascended from the bottomless pit, and will finally go into perdition.

The seven heads of the beast on which the woman was sitting are said to denote the seven mountains, or hills, on which the city of Rome is built. All students know that Rome has always been called the city of seven hills.

“And there are seven kings: five are fallen, and one is, and the other is not yet come,” verse ten. Now the explanation of these “kings” shows beyond a doubt that the beast here, as we have said above, is Rome, as a government, first civil, and then ecclesiastical—civil till its downfall in 476, and then ecclesiastical under the popes.

The word “kings” here is not to be taken in its literal sense, but in the sense of a form of government. So here it means that the Roman government has existed under seven different forms. Five of these forms had passed away when John wrote. One was then in existence; and, of course, the other had not come then. Now let us consider these seven forms of government in their order. The city of Rome was founded in the year 753 B. C., according to the usual chronology. At first its government was monarchical, that is, it was a kingdom. This lasted about 144 years, and then the kings were expelled and the government took the form of a republic. This continued for about sixty years, and gave place to a government called a Decemvirate, that is, a government in the hands of ten men. This lasted only a few years. After that the government may be called a Consulate, as it was in the hands of two consuls. This form lasted till the time of Julius Cæsar, about 60 B. C. Under the consuls the Roman people increased in power very rapidly and conquered many countries, and reached the zenith of their power. About the year 60 B. C. the government fell into the hands of three men, hence it was called a Triumvirate. This did not last long, but soon gave place to the empire, which was in existence when John wrote. So the five fallen ones were the Kingdom, the Republic, the Decemvirate, the Consulate, and the Triumvirate. The one which was during John’s life was the empire. This lasted till 476 A. D.

The one that John said was to come is now to be described.

After the fall of the Roman Empire in the west, Rome as a civil power ceased to be. But soon it became the seat of a spiritual or ecclesiastical power under the popes, who, in a few years, became even more powerful than kings. At first the authority of the pope was confined to spiritual things, but after a time he got possession of certain portions of the country of Italy and so became a civil ruler with Rome for his capital city. So here we find Rome again the seat of government with the pope on the throne. This is the seventh "king," or form of government spoken of in this seventeenth chapter. Perhaps it will be well here to explain how this came about. In the year 751 A. D. the French people wanted to depose their incompetent King Childeric, and place Pepin, the mayor of the palace, on the throne. Pope Zachary gave them permission to do so. And then Pepin, out of gratitude, gave the pope that part of the territory of Italy known as the Exarchate of Ravenna. Later still other portions of territory, including the city of Rome were donated to the pope, and so he became the civil ruler of what for many years was known as the "States of the Church." This lasted till 1870, when, as we have seen above, Victor Emmanuel took this from the pope, and so divested him of all civil power.

And then it is said, "The beast that was, and is not, even he is the eighth, and is of the seven, and goeth into perdition."

The beast that was and is not, is the red dragon, or Satan personified in the pagan Roman Empire. But now he exists again as the "beast" of chapter thirteen, or Satan personified in the Roman Catholic Church. He is the eighth, but of the seven, because the pope and popery, or Roman Catholicism

are all one and the same thing in effect. "And the ten horns which thou sawest are ten kings which have received no kingdom as yet." These ten horns refer to the divisions into which the old Roman Empire in Europe was divided by the barbarians. Ten is a definite for an indefinite number. But it denotes the kingdoms that have for a long time now covered the territory of the ancient empire. These may be enumerated as follows: Italy, France, Spain, Portugal, England, Belgium, Holland, Switzerland, Austria, and Greece. These, it says, receive power one hour with the beast. This means they exist in union and harmony with the pope for a short time, and do his bidding faithfully in all things. This was true to the letter from the beginning of these kingdoms till the Reformation, and with some of them longer. These have one mind, it says, and shall give their power to the beast. They did this with all their hearts, especially in persecuting the church of God or the woman in the wilderness. And we read further that they shall make war with the Lamb. This they did with terrible earnestness. But we are assured that the Lamb shall overcome them, for He is Lord of lords and King of kings. And they that are with him are called and chosen and faithful. And it is said that these ten horns or kingdoms after awhile shall hate the harlot, that is, the Romish Church, and they shall make her desolate and naked, and shall eat her flesh and burn her with fire. For the Lord has put it into their hearts to do his will. Most of these kingdoms have already discarded the pope's authority and the rest will follow in due time. May the good time soon come when the beast will go into perdition.

We now come to the eighteenth chapter. This contains a further declaration of the fall of Babylon. An angel comes down from heaven having

great power, and the earth was lightened with his glory. This angel and his glory represent the great light that has come into the world through the spreading of the word of God among the nations. We are now living in this period. For the sixth trumpet and the sixth vial coincide as to time, and both mark the period that ushers in the Millennial glory. The last part of the nineteenth chapter marks the same period. The fall of Babylon, here declared with a strong voice by the angel, is the introduction of a metaphorical figure, in which the final fall of the great Roman Catholic power is compared to the fall of a mighty city, such as the fall of Babylon or Tyre in ancient times. The saying that it had become the habitation of devils, and the hold of every foul spirit, and a cage of every hateful and unclean bird, calls to mind the fallen walls and the battered and ruined buildings of an old, forsaken city, in which all foul creatures find a congenial habitation. (See Isa. 13:19-22.)

We will revert again to the great light this angel represented. For the last two or three centuries the light of the pure gospel has been making considerable progress among the nations of the earth. Especially has this been the case for the last three-quarters of a century; and at this time the spirit of missions is beginning to move mightily among all classes of Christians and in all denominations. The blessings of true religion, of Christian education, and of civil and religious liberty are being disseminated among the nations of this world as never before. And with the ever-increasing facilities of travel and of supplying the people of all lands with the word of God in their own language, these blessings will spread more and more rapidly still as the years go on. By noticing the reports of all missionary organizations, we are struck with the gratifying fact that every year shows a marked

advance over all the preceding years. The signs of the times are propitious. All nations are open to the missionary as never before. The thoughtful people of all nations are turning their eyes to the light of Christian America, and asking for the same light to be sent to them. The Macedonian cry is being heard all around the world as never before, "Come over and help us." I sometimes think that the course of Christianity in the world may be compared to a comet—to Halley's comet, for instance. This comet, when nearing that part of its orbit in which the sun is located, moves with ever-accelerating speed; but when it has passed the sun, and starts out on its long journey towards that end of its orbit farthest from the sun, its velocity becomes slower and slower, till, at its remote aphelion, it almost seems to be at a standstill. Then it repeats its course again in the same manner. But mark one thing, when a comet leaves the sun its velocity is so great that it makes the first half of its course around its orbit in a much shorter time than it takes to make its trip towards the sun.

Now let us apply this to the observed course of the true church of God on earth. At the time of the apostles it was at its perihelion. But the apostles themselves were not all dead before there was a perceptible decline in its purity and its glory. For the next two hundred years it had receded so far away that its identity was hardly discernible. And then it seemed for a thousand years to have become lost in the gross darkness of the Middle Ages. All seemed to be lost so far as pure Christianity was concerned. But at last the time of its return to its glorious perihelion of the Millennium was slowly but surely approaching. Luther nailed his famous theses to the doors of the cathedral church at Wurtemberg. The pope condemned

him and his doctrines by his famous bull. But that bull, instead of being honored, was burned in the streets of the city, in contempt of the pope and his power. The Bible was published in the mother tongue of the people. Luther's great speech at Worms was heard, the speech that thrilled Europe and caused the pope and his minion, Charles V, to tremble on their tottering thrones. And the star in the east appeared again, which led the wise men of the earth to go again in search of Him who was born King of the Jews. And ever since those stirring days the true church has been emerging more and more from its long obscurity and shedding its benign influence over all the earth with ever-accelerating rapidity; and the children of to-day may live to see this the glorious church of God, as a bride in her ornaments, wheel around the Sun of Righteousness, her Bridegroom, and take her place by His side, ere Halley's comet emerges again from its long absence and comes the second time unto their view.

But now we come to notice an exhortation delivered to God's children by a voice from heaven, which is exceedingly pertinent to the Protestant churches of this generation. That voice said: "Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues." As the captive Jews were called upon to come out of Babylon when her doom was imminent, and as Christ exhorted His followers to leave Jerusalem when they should see the signs of her desolation, so here this voice from heaven calls upon all Christians to come out of Rome or popery before she goes into perdition.

Since the beginning of the Reformation, God's people have been split up more or less into different denominations or sects. Many of these came directly or indirectly out of Romanism, as reformed

churches. But in those days of transition from darkness to light, many good men, like Luther and Calvin, and others, in their eagerness to eliminate from their systems the grosser evils of Romanism, such as justification by works, seemed to overlook the fact that all her dogmas and inventions were bad, and so brought along with them some of her lesser evils, which are none the less marks of the beast. Among these we may notice that form of church government known as ecclesiasticism or hierarchy. This is a form of church government in which it takes all the separate organizations to constitute the church, as the Roman Catholic Church, the Episcopal Church, the Presbyterian Church, North, the M. E. Church, South. This kind of church government is as truly of Rome as the baptizing of bells and the worship of relics. For in the New Testament we have nothing of the kind. Every separate church organization was an independent republic, having no head but Christ, and acknowledging no laws but His own, given through Him or His inspired apostles. Then again the original churches had no orders of officers—nothing but pastors and deacons. So all ranks of church officers, higher and lower, were unknown to the early church, and had their origin in Rome; and modes of baptism were as completely unknown to the apostolic churches as the doctrine of purgatory. The learned world today acknowledges the fact that the primitive churches practiced believer's immersion and nothing else.

Now all these things, and, perhaps, some others, that many of God's true people cling to and teach, are simply marks of the beast, and must be discarded as such sooner or later. For the time is fast approaching when the bride must get ready for the coming Bridegroom, and she must be clothed in pure white. It will never do to have these or

any other marks of Anti-christ polluting the bridal robes. The church in that day must and will all be one, as Jesus and His Father are one. The two highest duties of all Protestant denominations, and of all true Christians now is, to honestly square themselves by the word of God, and discard, as things unholy, all that is of Rome, no matter how hard or how humiliating the task may be; and then go to work, with a united front, with Him on the white horse, who is called "Faithful and True." And thus join in the final battle against the beast, the false prophet, and all other evils, that is to be the prelude to the coming of the kingdom. (See nineteenth chapter.) The greatest drawback now to the successful spread of the gospel is the divided forces of Christianity. Let all come together and get squarely on the old book and then all will be well. Then the world will begin to believe that the Father has sent the Son. The balance of this eighteenth chapter, following the metaphor of a fallen city, displays the friends of popery lamenting over her downfall and enumerating her multitudinous works and her lost glories. And in the last paragraph a mighty angel drops a millstone into the sea, as a figure, denoting her utter and everlasting ruin.

The nineteenth chapter opens with a grand oratorio of praise to God for His wonderful works in destroying Babylon, the great corrupting harlot, and in avenging the blood of His saints at her hands. This glorious song of praise was participated in by much people in heaven, by the four living creatures, by the twenty-four elders, and by the voice of a great multitude, which sounded like great waters and mighty thundering from heaven. The refrain of this song was "Alleluia," which means "Praise ye Jehovah." And they said, "Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honor to Him: for

the marriage of the Lamb is come and His wife hath made herself ready. And to her it was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white: for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints." This denotes a period in the history of the church when all Christendom will be united and divested of everything impure, unholy, and hateful. And it also points to the time when Christianity, as a whole, has arrayed herself in the pure, white righteousness of implicit obedience to God's will, and of strict conformity to His word. Yes, a time when the church, no longer in the wilderness, but standing, so to speak, on Mount Zion, the most conspicuous and the most glorious institution on earth, shall claim her own, as the bride, arrayed in her ornaments of glorious beauty, and shall begin to take her place by the side of the Lamb, and thus enter into His glory, the glory of Him in whose blood she has been washed.

From verse eleven to the end of this chapter we have another portrayal of the stirring events which shall immediately precede the glorious opening of the Millennial Age, when Christ and the church, His bride, shall reign on the earth for a thousand years. These same events have been given in previous chapters, but under different figures or representations. It says: "And I saw heaven opened, and behold a white horse; and he that sat upon him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness He doth judge and make war. His eyes were a flame of fire, and on His head were many crowns; and He had a name written, that no man knew but He Himself. And He was clothed with a vesture dipped in blood: and His name is called The Word of God. And the armies which were in heaven followed Him on white horses, clothed in linen, white and clean. And out of His mouth goeth a sharp sword, that with it He should smite

the nations; and He shall rule them with a rod of iron; and He treadeth the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God." This introduces the closing years of the mighty missionary period which is now going on. But heretofore the work, though wonderful, has been slow and much hampered by difficulties. These difficulties were, and still are, in a large measure, owing to the following things: A direct opposition to the work of missions on the part of good men. This, of course, is founded on a misconception of the teachings of the Bible, and is fast becoming extinct. Another and serious trouble is the indifference of the mass of church members. This is slowly but surely passing away. Then another is the broken up condition of Protestant Christianity into different and sometimes clashing denominations. By this one trouble the work of God's people in missions is shorn of half its power. This difficulty will have to pass away before the wonderful times of which we are now speaking can possibly come. There are many and favorable signs now existing, which point to the passing of this most serious difficulty. The only other hindrance I wish to mention here is, the sad failure on the part of God's people of all classes of giving to the work of spreading the gospel over all the world. It has been well said, that heretofore we have been only playing at missions.

God wants and intends that His people shall be co-workers with Him in the great work of bringing the world to Christ. We can't all go and preach, but we can all give, and give liberally to help carry on the work. Some are called to go down into the well, others are called to hold the rope. Some must go to the battle, others must stay by the stuff. Let all do their duty, and then all will fare equally in the results of the victory. This difficulty, too, is slowly passing. When all these hin-

drances shall have passed away, and when God's people shall have come into their own as His co-workers, then the rider on the white horse shall go forth, followed by the armies of heaven on white horses, and the last eventful campaign of the war of conquest shall open, in which the world is to be brought to the feet of Him who is King of kings and Lord of lords. An angel standing in the sun calls upon all the fowls of heaven to gather together to the feast, when they can feed on the flesh of kings, captains, and mighty men, as well as on their horses, and on men of every class and degree. But we must not understand this to be a real war in which men and horses are to be slain, but a bloodless war, carried on by the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God, and in which not men, but evil principles and evil doctrines and practices are to be slain and put out of the way.

LECTURE VII.

We now come to the twentieth chapter. This chapter gives the beginning, progress, and completion of the Millennial period, the falling away after the release of Satan, the resurrection and general judgment, and the final and everlasting separation of good and evil.

It will be well here to make some observations in regard to the state of things at the opening of the Millennial Age, and to note a few other matters relative thereto. We may, it seems to me, gather very properly from what we have passed over in the interpretation of this book, that, just before the ushering in of this wonderful time, the whole world will have become nominally Christian. Mohammedanism, Catholicism, Heathenism, Mormonism, and all other grossly erroneous religious systems will have been so far overcome by the light of God's truth, and by the power of the Holy Spirit, that they will be no longer a menace to the church. And all the abominable social and moral evils that now curse and corrupt mankind will have become so unpopular and heinous in the eyes of the mass of the people that they can no longer dominate society. And real Christian education will have reached such a height, and become such a power for good, that its benign influence will be felt as a power indeed in all departments of life. Then also civil liberty, the birthright of every people, will have so completely displaced all forms of tyranny and misgovernment that the nations of the earth will be in the fittest possible state for the coming of the kingdom. Also we may feel sure that the principles of arbitration among nations, now at work in all civilized parts of the earth, will have virtually dispensed with wars, and brought about such a state of peace and amity among all the

peoples of the world that it may be said that the brotherhood of man is in sight. And, again, the times of the gentiles will have been so far fulfilled that the way will be open for God's ancient people, the seed of Abraham, to go back to the Holy Land and inherit their own again. And once more, the different denominations of evangelical Christianity will have reached such a state of good feeling, and such a burning desire to discard all human creeds and party lines, and get still more closely together, that the way will be open for a great general congress of Christians to adjust all matters of difference and get back at last on the good old platform of God's eternal truth.

Now what are we to understand by the angel coming down from heaven and chaining the devil in the bottomless pit for a thousand years? I take this to be a literal act of divine power banishing the evil one and all his fallen angels, so that they can not exert their influence any more on mankind; for Satan and his angels are all under the absolute control of God. But it has been the will of God to permit these evil beings, ever since the fall of man, to do their bad work, under certain restraints, among men. And they constitute, as Paul says, "the power of the air." Eph. 2:2. That is, they constitute a mighty army or power in the atmosphere of our earth, over which Satan himself is the prince or king. But as the waves of the sea, they can go so far and no farther. And when it pleases God to withdraw His permission of their evil work among men, He has nothing to do but to speak the word and Satan and all his legions of bad spirits are bound and sealed in the pit. Some hold the opinion that the world will finally reach such a state of righteousness under the ordinary influences of Christianity that the binding of Satan will be only apparent and not

real. But we have nothing in all the past history of the world of mankind, and of the church of God in the world, to justify this opinion. I know of no time or place in the past, and I know of no locality of any note at the present time, but that the power of evil has been or is in the ascendancy. God has ever worked, and still does work, in the realm of His kingdom on earth, through the instrumentality of men. And men, at their best, under all dispensations, are imperfect, and susceptible more or less to the wiles of the devil. And this will be thus till that time comes when God's laws will be written in men's hearts, and when one will not have to say to another, "Know the Lord," for all shall know Him from the least to the greatest, and the knowledge of God shall cover the earth as the waters cover the sea. But the time of which we have just spoken can never come under present conditions. For instance, take our own Southland to-day, where you will find the purest type of Christianity the world has ever seen since the apostolic age, and where the conditions for its spread and dissemination are better, perhaps, than any others the world over, and how do you find it? Take the census of any State, county, or precinct; any city, town, or village, and you will find the non-Christians in the majority, and evil in one shape or another in the ascendancy. And this is the case, even, under the very best circumstances, where good Christian influences seem to predominate, where Sunday School bells ring every Sunday morning, and church bells call the people to divine worship twice every Sabbath day. When all has been done that can be done under present conditions, it is all that Christianity can do to hold its own, and still the world musters the larger army. And one of the saddest parts of all is that in the church of this time there are many like the

mixed multitude that followed Israel from Egypt, who were in Israel but not of Israel. So when the world blows its trumpet to gather its hosts to the pastimes and the pleasures of the flesh, many whose names are on our church books are seen in the front ranks even, and sometimes carrying the banners of the evil one.

So there must be a radical change, a change that will not affect the fruit of the tree only, but the tree itself, root, body, and branch. The power of the devil must not be curtailed, but destroyed. His influence over mankind must not be restrained only, but annihilated. He must not be allowed to take refuge in the dry places of the earth, but banished completely from the earth, and bound and sealed in the pit.

Then the good influences of the gospel, and all other good influences that flow from genuine Christian civilization will have free course, and be glorified. The streams of good, no longer blocked by obstructions, will flow on as ever-increasing powers in accomplishing the will of God in the salvation of the world. Then as a certain writer has said, "God will no longer have to elect men to enter His kingdom, but men, moved by their better judgment, uninfluenced by external evil, will elect themselves to be His followers, through the ever present influence of the good Spirit."

And in the fourth verse it says: "And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them; and I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus and for the word of God, and which had not worshiped the beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark upon their foreheads or in their hands; and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years." This seems to be a plain reference to, or rather a fulfillment of Dan. 7:26, 27: "But the

judgment shall sit, and they shall take away his dominion, to consume and to destroy it unto the end. And the kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people of the saints of the Most High, whose kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey Him." So John saw thrones and they sat upon them. This denotes a judgment. But what judgment? Plainly the one spoken of in Daniel, as above, and the one mentioned or referred to in this book of Revelation, when the kingdoms of this world are to become the kingdoms of God and His Christ. "And they sat upon them." Who sat upon them? Christ and His people, the members of His kingdom both on earth and in heaven. "And judgment was given unto them." Given unto whom? To Christ and His saints against the beast and all the enemies of His church which we have seen in this book. The time had come when the saints should possess the kingdom. Dan. 7:22. The souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus here, are the same as appeared in chapter 6:9, 10, under the altar praying God to avenge their blood on them of the earth who had killed them. They were told to wait till their brethren, who should be likewise put to death, should join them. And so now the time has arrived in the vision which John saw, and here are the souls of all the martyrs of Jesus. And it is said they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years. And this was said to be the first resurrection. Now what about this resurrection? Is it to be a real or a symbolic resurrection? On this subject good men differ. But the author of these Lectures takes the symbolic side of the question. That is, it is not to be a real but an apparent resurrection. None of the dead are spoken of here as living and reigning with Christ but the martyrs;

and of course the martyrs may be considered the best type of Christians. So in the Millennium the world will be filled with a class of Christians so holy, so zealous, so good and pure, that it will seem that all the best of God's holy ones who lived in the past have come back to life again. The reign of Christ I look upon as a spiritual reign, not a personal one. He is to reign through His Holy Spirit and His people on earth with no opposition. I base my interpretation of an apparent resurrection upon the fulfillment of the prophecy in Malachi 4:5. Here God promised to send Elijah before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord. That day of the Lord had reference to the destruction of Jerusalem. The Jewish people understood this prophecy as to be fulfilled by the real return of Elijah. Matt. 17:10. But Jesus taught them that it was fulfilled by the coming of John the Baptist. Matt. 17:11, 12, 13. Now as that Scripture was fulfilled in the coming of John the Baptist, who was a man of like character and like work with Elijah, so this in Revelation may likewise be fulfilled by good people living in the world of like character and like principles with the martyrs.

It will be well now to give some observations in regard to the Millennial period. First as to its nature. It will be preeminently Christian. Religion will be the chief concern of all the people. Everything else will be subordinate to that. The church will be the first and all-important institution. Christian love and harmony will prevail in absolute perfection. Peace will flow as a river. All arts, sciences, and literatures will be so many means of advancing the joys and pleasures of religion. The home, the school, the shop, the store, the factory will be conducted on the highest and best principles of religion; for Christ and His people will reign supreme. Court-houses, jails,

penitentiaries, and all penal institutions will be abolished, or changed into places of altogether different uses.

And again, medical science and sanitary conditions will have reached such a state of perfection that human life will be wonderfully lengthened. It will be a rare thing for the young to die. The people will have learned to raise children on hygienic principles. They will know how to eat and drink for their good; and the world will be blessed with vast multitudes of happy old people, who see around them their children and children's children to the fourth and fifth generations. Most of the diseases that kill out the people now will have been mastered or eliminated. Churches, Sunday Schools, and educational institutions of all grades will fill the country with their blessings, spiritual, moral, and intellectual. Children will be under none but the best of Christian influences, and so will be converted in early life, and, so to speak, step from the cradle into the kingdom of heaven. Implements of war will be seen only in museums along with other curiosities. Great battleships will have gone out of use, and been converted into more peaceful craft. The very heavens will smile with a sweeter serenity, the birds sing with a gladder melody, and the flowers bloom with a more heavenly glory. And again, the population of the world will increase to such an extent that we can have no conception of it under present conditions. The science of agriculture, drainage, and irrigation will reach such perfection that the valleys, the hills, the swamps that were, and even the desert will blossom as the rose, and wave with luxuriant crops of all that is useful to man and beast. Places where now miasma reeks and sheds its baleful influence to poison the air, will have been so changed as to be filled with happy homes, prosperous farms,

and blessed with a salubrious climate. And even the vast and burning desert, where nothing but death seems to reign supreme, will be so changed by principles of irrigation, of which we know nothing now, as to be filled with the richest farms and beautiful, shady homes, dotted with cities, towns, and villages, and crossed by numerous railroads over which rushing trains move a hundred miles an hour, where now the slow camel plods his weary way.

To all these things the signs of the times are now pointing so plainly that all who will may see them. And the world of mankind is now moving towards this wonderful goal with a rapidity that is astonishing to us at the present time. But, like the comet, as it approaches the sun, that rapidity, in a few more generations, will have so increased as to be nearing the good time of which we are here writing.

Now as to the time of the duration of the Millennial period. It says a thousand years. But this is a book of symbols. We have seen that three years, and forty-two months had to be reduced to days, and then these days represented years. Now suppose we reduce these thousand years to prophetic days, allowing three hundred and sixty days to a year, and we will have 360,000 years. At any rate I like to take the thousand years to be a large definite number for a still larger indefinite number. This seems more likely to be true, not only because it appears more reasonable, but also because it agrees better with some of the implied teachings of Scripture. On the ground of reason and of Scripture, too, we will note this. In Isa. 53:11 we read: "He shall see of the travail of his soul and shall be satisfied." I understand that to mean that in the general wind up of the affairs of this world Christ shall see the results of His atoning

death and shall be satisfied. It don't seem reasonable that the Lord could be satisfied on seeing that Satan, the enemy of God and man, has, in the end, the lion's share. But, says one, it has always been the case so far. Yes, but God works slowly, at least that is the way it looks to us. And so, in His dealings with the human race, He moves slowly, but, in the final result, His works and plans are always seen to be glorious. Take the case of Abraham and his promised posterity. Abraham was told to leave his native land and journey into a land that should be shown him. Gen. 12:1. And, said the Lord, I will make of thee a great nation. Abraham obeyed, being seventy-five years old, and with not a child in the world. Time passed on. At last Abraham is about one hundred years old and then Isaac is born. Many more years pass away before Jacob is born, the third in the line. Then at last the twelve patriarchs appear, and all with Jacob go down into Egypt. There they remain under various changes of fortune for two or three hundred years. At last a start is made to the land of Canaan that had been promised to Abraham and his seed four hundred and thirty years before. Then, instead of going directly to the promised land from Egypt, forty more years are spent on the way. But in the end it all turned out for the best. Notice again how long it was from the promise, that was made to poor Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden, of the seed that should bruise the serpent's head, till that promise was fulfilled in the Babe of Bethlehem. So in the redemption of the world of mankind God's work is slow but sure. And taking our interpretation of the period of the Millennial Age as continuing for a very, very long time, in which under such favorable conditions as we have tried to depict on another page, we may be enabled to see that in the final day of judgment

the saved will constitute a vast majority. And then Satan with the beast and the false prophet, and all whose names were not in the book of life from the foundation of the world, will be but a small party in the comparison.

“But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished.” This means that during this glorious period no people will live on the earth like those bad men who killed the martyrs. And does it not seem strange that at the end of this glorious age of blessings, Satan should be released and permitted to deceive the nations again? Or does it not seem that these good times would last forever? But no, God knows best. But, really, can we see, on close examination into the matter, any reason why this change should be? Let us try.

In order to clear up the matter we will have to go back to fundamentals. God’s moral and intelligent creatures, as men and angels, must worship and serve Him of their own accord. In other words, they must have that free agency that enables them to serve Him freely without constraint. God could not of course accept any other service. Now the ability or capacity to obey and serve freely implies the ability and capacity not to obey or serve. Then, so far as we can see, the possibility of evil is and always will be a necessity. And so God wants His creatures, who are endowed with moral natures and intelligence, as well as freedom to serve voluntarily, to learn by experience or observation, or both, the real nature of evil and the awful consequences that it entails upon those sinning, and, as in the case of man, of their posterity. But intelligent moral beings who have no knowledge of evil at all, either by experience or observation, are and will be, so long as that is the case, in danger of falling into sin. This

is proved by the experience of the past. For instance, take the case of the pure and holy angels whom God created in heaven. Some of them, at a time we know not when, left their first estate (Jude 6) and abode not in the truth (John 8:44), and so disobeyed or rebelled and brought the awful consequences of evil upon themselves. And the elect angels, who fell not, have had such a lesson through observation that there never will be the least danger of their fall. The knowledge they have received of the nature and consequences of evil will forever hold them on the side of safety. Thus evil had its birth in heaven, if we understand aright; but it and all who were concerned in it were quickly banished thence. Jesus said, "I beheld Satan as lightning fall from heaven." Luke 10:18.

And in the inscrutable wisdom of God, it pleased Him, that, when man was created on this earth of ours, these same fallen angels, being now thoroughly evil themselves, should be permitted to come and tempt them through their lying misrepresentations. Adam and Eve had no knowledge of evil, and there was, so far as we know, no way for them and their posterity to have that knowledge but by experience. This is seen by Eve's being so easily deceived on being told that if she would eat of the forbidden tree she would be able to know good and evil. She naturally thought that evil was something far better than anything that God had granted her in all His goodness. And so she fell and Adam fell, and in them the whole human race; and dire was the fall. Poor Eve learned what evil was, but it was costly knowledge; and all their posterity have learned the same sad lesson by sad experience as well as by observation. Now when poor, fallen, human beings are saved through the atoning blood of Christ, as all will be who obey

Him (Heb. 5:9), and are finally delivered from all the dreadful effects of sin and are safe in heaven, there never will be any danger of their fall, not because they can not, but because of the lessons they have learned through sad experience.

And it seems to be the will of God that men and angels shall have one more dreadful manifestation of the deep wickedness of Satan and his angels, and of the awful consequences of evil when let loose on a happy world, and of the dire punishment which sin deserves, by loosing the evil one from his confinement and permitting him to go forth to deceive the nations once more. This is to be the last lesson on that subject. And that the lesson may be supremely effective, it comes immediately after a long and happy period of peace and joy unalloyed, and just before the final and everlasting separation of good and evil. So at the close of the happy period of the Millennial Age, the flood gates of sin and all kinds of evil practices are to be let loose on the world of mankind. The zeal of Christians will begin to cool. Worldly-mindedness will again become common; and the rising generation will drift away from the good old times into the dashing and flashing new ways of ever increasing sinful pleasures. The beast will return with all his deceivableness; the false prophet with all his lying wonders. Religion will be corrupted and counterfeited. Hypocrisy and deceit will again walk the earth in all their gaudy vileness. The very mother of abominations will seem to have come back with all her filthiness and shame. The devil will go forth with great rage, to deceive the nations and gather them together against the beloved city, or the true church, as the sand of the sea. And when it will appear to the few who shall be praying for deliverance, that the evil is going to swallow up the good forever, then,

when the wicked least expect it, the trump of judgment will sound long and loud, and the earth will tremble from pole to pole, and the righteous dead shall wake from their sleep, and the righteous living shall be changed in a moment, and all caught up to meet their coming Lord in the clouds of heaven surrounded by all His holy angels. And then when a mighty shriek goes up from a lost world, the fire of God shall descend upon the wicked, as in the days of Sodom and Gomorrah, and the world shall be wrapped in devouring flames. Soon the wicked, likewise, shall rise from their fiery graves and ascend to the Great White Throne of judgment. There, with the devil and his angels and the beast and the false prophet, shall these stand in judgment, and hear the awful sentence: "Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire."

LECTURE VIII.

At the beginning of the twenty-first chapter we are introduced to the happy abode of the true church in the spirit world. The affairs of this earth have been wound up, as we saw in the last chapter. Evil, in every sense of the word, has been put away forever and ever. God's true followers will never see, or feel, or even hear of it any more. The separation of good and evil is complete and eternal. Evil has served its purpose. Men and angels have learned the needed lesson. And the reward of each worker in the great drama of life has been received, whether good or bad. The curtain has fallen on the side of the lost, and the vision on that score has closed. But so far as the church of Christ is concerned, the vision opens afresh and with more resplendent glory. The marriage of the Lamb and His bride has taken place. The bride, the church, is displayed as a great city whose glory and beauty are inexpressible. Jesus told His disciples that he was going away to prepare a place for them; and that He would come again and take them to that place. John 14:2, 3. The place has now been prepared, as seen by John in the vision, and Christ has come and taken His people to that place. That is, John was permitted to see heaven, symbolically represented, as it is to be after the final judgment day. Now let us look upon and consider this place, the home of the blessed, in heaven.

"A new heaven and a new earth." I understand by this, that John saw that everything was new, that is, not like it formerly was. The heaven here denotes what was seen above, the heavens over our heads. It was new. No longer changeable, but with one eternal blaze of the richest and most pleasing glory. No longer bedimmed with clouds

and fogs, but clear and bright forever. No longer traversed by storm clouds, no longer shocked by the red lightning's flash and the dread thunder's roar, but always calm and peaceful in its smiling beauty.

"A new earth." That is, as all was new above, so all was new beneath. The ground, so to speak, was not clay, mud, slush, or dust; nor was its pavements of stone or concrete, but of gold clear as crystal. "And there was no more sea." This old earth of ours needs the sea. It furnishes the water to the clouds which they pour down upon the earth in rains to make it bud and bring forth food for man and beast. It is the source of life, in one sense, to all living. Then it freshens and helps to purify the atmosphere. But in the spirit world we will need no material water nor material food, and heaven's atmosphere needs no purifying. "And I saw the Holy City, New Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven." To the ancient Jews, Jerusalem was the city of their love and devotion. It was to them the holy city. Their God was there in His temple on the mercy seat between the cherubims in the holy of holies. And to all Christians of every age and country Jerusalem is the most holy of all cities or localities, not only because of its associations with David, Solomon, and the prophets, but still more on account of its associations with Jesus the Christ, and Him crucified. To all of God's people Jerusalem is the religious center of the world, and the cross of Christ is the center of the Bible, and of the history of mankind. So in reference to this widespread love and devotion, that is and always will be felt by the church of God toward the Jerusalem on earth, the home prepared for them in the new world is called the New Jerusalem. Then again, the Jerusalem of old was the place of the gathering together of God's

people, especially at the great feast of the Pass-over. And it was there that Jesus ate the last passover and established the Lord's Supper, and said that He would drink no more of that fruit of the vine till he drank it new with them in His Father's kingdom. Matt. 26:29. So here in the New Jerusalem we see the Christ, who is our pass-over, at the great and general gathering together of all the redeemed, where he will drink with them the wine of love and communion forever and ever. After speaking of the place, John then has some beautiful things to say of the people who dwell in it. He says that the tabernacle of God is with men and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people and He will be their God. The Israelites of old were, in a sense, God's people, and He was their God; but it was with much difficulty on God's part, and with many ups and downs on theirs. But now in this new and beautiful Jerusalem, the conditions are to be different. The true Israel will be God's people in spirit and in truth. Their iniquities will all be washed away in the blood of the Lamb. Nothing can ever any more come between the Lamb and His people to mar their peace and harmony. "And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes." This is a familiar figure based on a mother wiping the tears from the eyes of her child. But, though comforted for the present by those tender caresses, those tears may have to flow again and again. But God removes the tears from the eyes of his children by taking away all cause of tears finally and forever. Sin is the fundamental cause of tears. And, as in heaven, all sin will have been taken away, there can never be any more tears. "And there shall be no more death." Death, in this world, has universal sway. All things in the animal and vegetable kingdoms have to succumb to its power. It floats on every breeze, and

is perched on every flower. It is written on the dimples of the infant, and on the radiant blushes of the bride, as well as on the gray hairs and wrinkles of old age. As the slave once sat in the chariot of the Roman general on his triumphal entry into the seven-hilled city, and kept repeating the sad words, "Remember, thou art but a man," so grim death sits by us here in all the affairs of life, in the gilded palace of wealth, as well as in the lowly hovel of poverty, and repeats over and over again, "Remember, thou must die." Death to-day, as a mighty king, sits on his gruesome throne of skulls, surrounded by his paraphernalia of coffins, shrouds and hearses, in his palace of tombstones, graves, and crystallized tears, where sighs and groans are forever heard, intermingled with the sad and doleful music of the requiem—"Dust to dust, ashes to ashes."

But before we reach the vision John here saw, death will have been dethroned and destroyed by the resurrection of the dead, and he himself will have been cast into the lake of fire. So, then, in that beautiful world to which we are going, there will be no more death. No more fear and dread of death. No more breaking up of homes and home ties. No more funerals, with their sad processions. No more graveyards and cemeteries, where the mound hides the forms we so much loved, and which we long so much to see again, and where we in our love place flowers and white pebbles besprinkled with tears.

"Neither sorrow." Sorrow is another one of the sad fruits of sin. It and its twin sister, grief, are the heritage more or less of every human heart in this life. It is so often seen in the sad face, the tear-dimmed eye, and the black habiliments of mourning. It is heard so often in the suppressed sigh that heaves the breast, in the irrepressible

groan, and in the tremulous voice of the sorrowing. And as people grow older, the burden of sorrow becomes heavier and more grievous by frequent additions to its already crushing weight. But in heaven the fount of sorrow will be dried up. There can be no cause for sorrow and grief there. The sweet peace and joy of the inhabitant of heaven can never be alloyed by the touch of sorrow. Nothing can ever happen there to even throw the slightest shadow over the smiling face. Such things can never pass the gates of pearl. "Nor crying." Crying had its origin in the very precincts of Eden. When Adam and Eve turned their backs on that once happy home, the place where they first met and loved each other, the place where they had spent so many happy days walking hand in hand through the beautiful bowers and by the sparkling streams, and saw that they were being driven out from things so lovely and so dear, into the cold, sin-cursed world—how they cried! The fountain of tears was then opened for the first time. It reached its climax with our first parents, when Abel's body was found cold in death, and Cain had to be banished from home as a vagabond. This fountain of tears, or crying, was sanctified when "Jesus wept." It will be taken away when we reach the Eden above, and drink of the beautiful river of life, and eat of the rediscovered tree of life. And it will give place to the never-ceasing song of Moses and the Lamb.

"Neither shall there be any more pain." Pain is the venom of sin—the poison of the old serpent. We are born in pain, we live in pain more or less all the days of our lives, and we die in pain. "The sting of death is sin." In other words, pain is the penalty of a violated law—the curse of the law. We as sinners can never be freed from pain till we are absolutely saved body and soul from sin, and

made the righteousness of God in Christ." Jesus Himself suffered the pain that was due His people, and so in heaven they will be sinless forever, and as such, free from pain forevermore.

"For the former things are passed away." The former things here mean the things we are passing through now in this poor, sinful world and as poor, sinful creatures. This old body of flesh will have passed away. We will have spiritual bodies. Our old animal natures with all their appetites and passions and wants will be gone forever. The cares, trials, hardships, troubles and anxieties of this life will be no more. In fact, I know of nothing we shall carry from this life to the next, except our Christian love and fellowship. We will simply be God's children filled with love to Him and to one another, and supremely happy in this love, and fully contented with what our common Father gives in His goodness.

We now come to the Holy City, the bride, the Lamb's wife. This is a symbolic representation of the church in glory, after its final completion. All God's people from the beginning of this world to the end thereof are seen in one body in the vision, just as it will be after the resurrection and judgment day. This body of the saved is here represented as a city, a most beautiful city. In some places in the New Testament it is given under the figure of a temple, I Cor. 3:16, 17. Also as a building, I Cor. 3:9; II Cor. 5:1. Here in these Scriptures Solomon's temple seems to have been in the mind of the writer, as a figure after the pattern of which the holy spiritual temple of the church is built. For in Solomon's temple every stone and every piece of timber was thoroughly squared, or shaped and prepared to fit exactly into its place, before it was even brought to the locality of the building. This was done by the master builder,

who knew his business so well and who had his plan so completely in mind that he could, in his mind, see the completed temple before a single foundation stone was put in place. And again, these stones, or component parts of the temple, were a long time in the process of preparation, and many hands and many kinds of implements were used in perfecting that preparation. So it is in the spiritual temple, or the church of God. Each individual one of God's people is fitted and prepared for his place in the finished temple in heaven while living here in this life.

The Master Builder is infinite in wisdom and power, and so understands perfectly His plans, and knows how to deal with each one of us here so that we will fit exactly into our places in the heavenly building. All things we are made to pass through in this life are the means of our preparation. So Paul wrote, "All things work together for good to them that love God." Rom. 8:28.

Again, the church is represented as a body, under the similitude of the human body. I Cor. 12:27. Christ is the head of this body, and each one of His people is a member thereof.

But here in this twenty-first chapter, we have the church of Jesus Christ in its final glorified state given under the similitude of a city. And that city is called Jerusalem, because the Jerusalem on earth was the city in which God dwelt in olden times in His temple and among His people. And also it was the place where Christ the Lamb purchased the redemption of His people on the cross, and where His church was first established on earth. So the name is extremely appropriate.

John's description of this city, or the bride, the Lamb's wife, reaches the utmost limit of human comparison. It is a veritable *ne plus ultra*, that is, a thing beyond which there is nothing more. A

city of gold and precious stones with gates of pearl is the most beautiful, the most costly, and the most glorious city that can be presented to the human mind. There can be nothing beyond. But after all, this glorious representation is a figure, a symbol of the reality. Heaven is a spiritual place. We will be spiritual beings there. Christ is in His glorified spiritual body, the angels are spirits. God is a Spirit. There is no place or use for material things there, not even the most precious. For, as we can have no idea as to what our spiritual bodies will be, so we can have no definite idea as to what the heavenly or spiritual home will be. Earth's best is gold, pearls, and gems. But heaven's best is infinitely beyond these. And when prophets have written all they can write in human language, and when poets have reached the highest flights of human imagination in song, and when orators have exhausted all metaphor and simile, still the half has never been told.

And it is said that the city had no need of the sun or the moon to shine in it; for the glory of God did enlighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof. There will be no need of material light in that world of spiritual creatures. Nor can the eternal things of heaven ever need anything so temporal and perishable as sun, moon, and stars. All things there must be perfect, unchangeable, and eternal.

"And there shall be no night there," verse 25. This suggests a beautiful thought. The poet has said:

"Night is the time for rest.
How sweet, when labors close,
To gather round the aching breast
The curtain of repose."

But in heaven there will be no "aching breast," no tiresome labors, no weary limbs, and no need of

repose. Hence, no need of night. Here the poor, frail body tires. And every part of our being is so closely related to the body of flesh, they all tire. The limbs, the muscles, the nerves, the brain, and even the immortal mind, thinking through mortal organs, all become tired and need rest. But in the spirit world there can be no such thing as being tired. Perfect spiritual natures know no weariness, no decay, hence they need no rest, no recuperation.

All through these last two chapters, the Lord stops now and then to speak a word of warning, or of exhortation to those who should read this book. These solemn admonitions are given to show us that nothing that is evil, or abominable, or false, shall ever enter into these holy places, or enjoy these happy privileges. None but the holy can live in a holy heaven. None but the blood-washed can be holy. None but those who obey and follow the Lamb can be blood-washed. "They have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. We sing:

"What can take away my sin?
Nothing but the blood of Jesus."

So, then, none but the pure in heart, none but those whose names are in the book of life from the foundation of the world can enter into and inherit all these things. The supreme question for each one is, then, "Is my name written there?"

Jesus said: "Rejoice not that the spirits are subject to you, but rejoice rather that your names are written in heaven."

The twenty-second, or last, chapter opens with this: "And he showed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb." Jesus spoke of the

water of life. He told the woman of Samaria that whosoever should drink of the water that he should give, should never thirst; but that the water he should give would be in him a well, or spring, of water, and continuing in him. John 4:14. Here Jesus represents true religion in the heart, as living water, that is, a spring of fresh water bubbling up and flowing as a perpetual fountain, making glad the heart of its possessor, and blessing all around.

So in this life and in this world the water of life is as a little spring in the heart of each one of God's people. But in heaven it is spoken of as a river. And this river, it is said, flows from the throne of God and the Lamb, showing that the source of eternal life is God the Father and God the Son. This river shows the abundance of the water of life in heaven, as contrasted with the spring in the heart here. Jesus speaks of the abundant life (John 10:10) that He gives to them who come to Him. This enlarges the idea expressed in the term river. For it is the nature of a river to have a small beginning and to go on its way ever increasing in width, in depth, and in power.

Then we are told that on each side of this river of life was there the tree of life. Our first introduction to the tree of life was in the Garden of Eden. The object of this tree seemed to be to perpetuate the life of him who should eat of it. But after man became a sinner it was not best for him to live forever in that state, and so he was debarred that tree by the flaming sword of the angel, and so was permitted to die, that through death, and especially the death of the second Adam, there might yet be an everlasting life. So, when here we find this eternal life verified in all its fullness, in the heavenly Eden, the tree of life again appears

standing on both sides of the river of life, and all the way along its banks, denoting its perpetual life-sustaining power.

“And there shall be no more curse.” Verse 3. We all know from sad experience the effects of the curse that fell upon all things earthly when sin first entered. Before that unfortunate hour earth was a paradise. Love and peace spread their sunny wings over mountain, hill, and valley. The heavens above smiled in love upon all the new and joyous scenes of this world. The rising sun was greeted with happy songs in the morning, and all through the day his light and genial warmth shed blessings upon things animate and inanimate. By night the silvery moon and twinkling stars made the darkness beautiful. The murmuring brooks, the blooming flowers, the singing birds, and the rustling leaves, all seemed to blend into the universal harmony of peace, love, and joy.

But when Eve reached forth her hand and took the forbidden fruit and ate:

“Earth felt the wound, and Nature, from her seat,
Sighing through all her works, gave signs of woe,
That all was lost.”

And thus fell the dire curse upon the earth, which blighted and still blights all things earthly. It mingled gloom with the light, sorrow with joy, envy with love, anger with peace, and so made a sad mixture of good and evil, as we now find it in this world. Sin brought the curse into the world, the curse entails countless evils, that end only in death. But in the new world to which God's people are bound, there is to be no curse. It will be gone forever. The effects and the memory of it will be alike obliterated.

Before the curse blighted this earth, God walked with man in the midst of the garden, and God and

man held sweet communion together. But after the fall, this friendship and mutual communion were broken, and there could be no intercourse except through a mediator. In heaven, however, where there is to be no more curse, we read that the throne of God and the Lamb shall be in it; and His servants shall serve Him. And again, "They shall see His face, and His name shall be in their foreheads." "And they shall reign forever and ever."

Yes, we shall be kings and priests with the Lord Jesus and reign with Him. What a change that will be from our present condition in this life! Here, though we are the sons of God, yet we are still under the dominion more or less of many evil things. Sin still dwells in our mortal bodies to our grief and sorrow. Satan and his evil angels still follow and harass us as we pass through his kingdom on our way to the celestial city. Though they can not destroy us, they give no end of strife and worry. This old body of flesh we must drag along as a dead body chained to our souls, till it is finally laid down at the brink of the river. Here it is fight the good fight of faith; there it will be reign as more than conquerors through Him that loved us and gave Himself for us.

"We shall reign with Him forever and ever." "For the time is at hand." That is, the time when all these things will be fulfilled. Then, after the great judgment day, he that is unjust will continue unjust, and he that is righteous will continue to be righteous. There will be no more changes.

"And behold I come quickly, and my reward is with me, to give to every man according as his work shall be." As compared to eternity, any period of time is short. But in the case of each one of us, the time is short, sure enough, because He comes, in one sense, at our death. For the issues of eternal life or eternal death are virtually

settled when a man dies. Jesus taught that to die in one's sins is to be lost forever. John 8:21. All preparation must be made during this life, and our common sense tells us the sooner the better. The reward here spoken of is, so to speak, the harvest which each one will reap in the eternal world, and it will be according to his work. The Christian's reward will be the harvest that comes from his work as a Christian and a servant of Jesus Christ, and will be proportionate to his sowing. The Christian's reward is all good. His sins were imputed to Jesus, his substitute, and are all put away as far as the east is from the west.

Verse fourteen is one of the most beautiful in the whole Bible. "Blessed are they that do His commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city." The word blessed means happy, that is, happy is the state or condition of those who are permitted to enter into the city. For within the city everything is good. Its very atmosphere is love. Its fountains and streams are waters of life. Its food is the tree of life. Its light emanates from the face of God and the Lamb. Its character is holiness. Its music is the everflowing melody of heaven's grand oratorio, compared with which nothing has ever been heard or conceived of on earth. Its language is the common dialect of heaven, which has been spoken only there since the stars sang together on their natal day. Its companionship is that of the good of all ages, and the holy angels, which had been ministering spirits to us on earth. Our work will be to serve God in the beauty of holiness by doing His will, which will be our will also. All the evil at that time will be without the city, in the outer darkness. And there will be then between the good in the city and the evil outside of the city a great gulf fixed, so that no

passing either way will be possible. The separation will be eternal.

Jesus here calls Himself the root and offspring of David, the bright and morning star. As God, he was the root, or creator of David. And as man he was the offspring of David, having been born of David's line, or posterity. "The morning star." A morning star always heralds the coming of a new day. It shows that the darkness will soon pass away and the light will again bless and enliven the earth. After our first parents had sinned, a long, dark night fell upon this old sin-cursed world of ours. Men groped in darkness. Only once in a while a dim light appeared to a prophet or a seer. At length, in the fullness of time a star was seen by wise men in the east, the star of Bethlehem. That star led the way to the babe of Bethlehem, the true morning star, to show that the long and dreary night was about to pass away and give place to the day of the kingdom of heaven. That day has been slowly passing towards its meridian nearly two thousand years. During the Dark Ages its sun was almost totally eclipsed by the man of sin and his clouds of superstition. In the sixteenth century, that eclipse began to pass off gradually, and the day of the kingdom of heaven has been growing brighter ever since. It will reach its glorious meridian in the Millennial Age. Then, when Satan is released, it will seem to sink again behind the mountains of Gog and Magog for awhile, only to rise to a still brighter noontide in the heavenly Jerusalem as we see here.

And now comes our Lord's last loving invitation to sinners before the closing of the canon of Scripture. He was now on the last and closing chapter of his word. And, like a tender mother writing to her children, would add just one more sentence brimming full of love and sweet affection, so Jesus

here adds just one more invitation, before bidding adieu to the world for which He died, in these matchless words: "The Spirit and the bride say Come. And let him that heareth say Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely."

The Spirit, that is, the Holy Spirit, says Come. The Holy Spirit truly invites and woos every one. Yes, the Spirit strives with men. This, the Spirit's call, is sometimes, as it were, a trumpet call, and sometimes a still, small voice. The jailer had the trumpet call, Lydia the still, small voice. And this call comes to all in many ways and at many times during one's life. But by repeated refusals to hear the heart grows harder and spiritual ears duller. And at last the call may not be heard at all, or the Spirit may cease to call. A lady once wished to rise every morning at a certain hour. So she placed an alarm clock in her room, set to go off at that hour. Sure enough, at the time desired the faithful clock gave the alarm. This was kept up for many days, and as long as the lady obeyed the call it was heard plainly. After awhile, however, on hearing the warning, she concluded to go to sleep again, and after repeating this for several days, the warning was heard less and less distinctly, till at last it was not heard at all. So with the calls of the Spirit. The sinner after awhile may sleep on under the loudest calls. I asked a hard-hearted old man once, a man who said he had no serious thought, if it had always been that way with him. His countenance changed at once, and he answered sadly in the negative, saying that the time had been when it was very different, but he would not heed, and his heart grew hard.

"The bride says Come." The bride is the church. And it is pre-eminently true that the church is calling men, women and children, wherever the gospel

minister proclaims the word. And it is through the church that all the many means are used to give the word of God to the people, and to disseminate religious knowledge, and to spread the gospel by missionary efforts among all peoples. The mission of the church is to call the people of the whole world to repentance. The great commission was given to the church, and is still binding on every individual church and minister and member of the kingdom of heaven.

“And let him that heareth say Come.” Each one who hears the good news of salvation should tell his friends and neighbors, and try to induce them to seek a like blessing. When a sick person has found a remedy for his disease, he naturally wishes others who are sick to have the remedy and be cured likewise. When Andrew had found the Christ, he sought out his brother Simon and brought him to Jesus. John 1:41, 42. True religion in the heart makes one generous. And, moreover, it fills one with love for the souls of others. Hence the admonition, “Let him that heareth say Come.”

“And let him that is athirst come.” This world furnishes food and drink for our mortal bodies. But it has nothing, absolutely nothing, for the soul. When the children of Israel were passing through the wilderness, God had to feed them with bread from heaven and give them water from the rock. And so all men, in a spiritual sense, are passing through a dreary wilderness in this life, and must have food and drink from heaven or perish. The Hebrews thirsted and cried for water, and God gave them water from the rock at Horeb. And Paul says: “That rock was Christ.” I Cor. 10:4. That is, as that rock furnished water for the bodies of men, so Christ alone can furnish water for the souls of men. When the Israelites thirsted,

they went to the rock, or the stream flowing from the rock. So, when men now thirst spiritually, they are here called to come to Jesus, the spiritual rock, and drink. It is natural for men to thirst. It is the call of the body for the water it must have, or it can't perform its functions, and without it, sooner or later, must die. And as our bodies need water and call for it by a sensation called thirst, so our souls need the water of life, and call for it by an inward craving of the spirit, or inner man, which is here called thirst. Now, as it was the duty and the privilege of the Hebrew in the desert to come to the water, which God had given, and drink, so it is the duty and the high privilege of every person to come to the water Christ has furnished for their souls and drink. It is a duty, because if they do not drink, they will die the second death, as well as the first; and it is a privilege, because God has provided it in his love, at the cost of the death of His Son, and it is without money and without price to us. But the trouble is that men so often drown this thirst of the soul by the insatiate counter-thirst of the mortal body for the good things of this poor, fleeting life, that they, by neglecting the immortal soul for the mortal body, lose both in the end. And the question then arises that knows no answer: "What shall it profit a man if he shall gain the whole world and lose his own soul?" Mark 8:36. "Or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?" And again, men often resort to other means to quench the soul's thirst than that which God has provided. This is because of the inborn aversion in our fallen natures to obey God. And again, it is because, if one comes to Christ, he must deny himself and take up his cross. And he must likewise humble himself before God and man. This the human heart fights against in its stubborn pride, and rebels against in its boasted

self-sufficiency. This aversion in the heart of man towards God and His commandments has given rise to all the forms of false religion, all attempts to satisfy the thirst of the soul by so-called good works, as well as to all phases of infidelity, and to all attacks on the Bible to destroy it, or to pervert its meaning. So, then, let him that is athirst come and drink and live.

And now we come to the last of these loving invitations, and the one that is by far the best. "And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely." The first word of hope and encouragement that was given to man in his fallen and lost estate was, The seed of the woman shall bruise the serpent's head. That was dark and enigmatical, yet it gave a ray of hope and encouragement to man in his hopeless desolation. But this last and best of all invitations to fallen humanity is clear and bright and unmistakable in its meaning. That first word has come down through all the generations of mankind, being augmented here and there by other and fuller words, giving brighter and still brighter hope, till here it has reached its full and beautiful climax of hope and blessedness. "Whosoever will," etc. I think it was Richard Baxter who said that he was so glad that the Lord used here that comprehensive word "whosoever." "For," said he, "that includes me without a doubt. If," said he, "the Lord had said, 'Let Richard Baxter come,' he would have thought it was some other Richard Baxter, and not himself. But as it was, there could be no mistake." Whosoever includes every one without any possible exception. It includes the lowest as well as the highest. The vilest as well as the least immoral. The most highly civilized man, as well as the lowest savage in his jungle. The people of the most highly favored Christian land, as well as the heathen in his blindness.

"Whosoever will." Let this glad word sound out to the ends of the earth. Let the lost in the fashionable world hear it. Let the despairing in the slums hear it. Let the prisoner in his dungeon hear it. Let heathen nations hear it and rise above their superstitions. Let the Mohammedan hear it and forsake his false prophet. Let the Roman Catholic come and forsake the "man of sin." Let all hear and come and take the water of life freely. What a wonderful meaning is couched in that little word "freely!" It costs nothing. It is without money and without price. Hence this beautiful language of the prophet Isaiah, as he saw in prophetic vision, afar off, the blessings of the water of life and the bread of life. "Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; come ye, buy, and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price." Isa. 55:1.

One last word. "Surely I come quickly. Amen." This is a last warning admonition to urge the people to accept the invitations as above given. When He comes He wants to find us ready, watching and waiting. With some it will be too late when He comes. Death may find us unprepared. The trumpet of the judgment day may find us not ready. The old world, in the days of Noah, was warned. But they heeded not, and the flood came and took them all away. Sodom was warned, but they would not hear, and the fire of God came down upon them and they were consumed in their sin. Jerusalem was warned. Jesus wept over it, and said: "How often would I have gathered thy children together even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not." Matt. 23:37. But they would not hear, and went about to kill Him as they had the prophets before Him. And their house was left unto them deso-

late. God gave them up. And when at last the awful day of their calamity fell upon them; and when the Roman army had broken down the walls and were rushing in upon them with drawn swords, they could but die in despair. With them it was too late. And so with some now, who will not hear, and will not heed, the grieved Spirit leaves them to their fate. But let us who read these words, hear, believe, and obey, and then we shall be permitted to enter into the city and eat of the tree of life. Amen.

SKETCH OF THE AUTHOR



SKETCH OF THE AUTHOR'S LIFE.

In the early part of the nineteenth century there lived a simple farmer in the eastern part of Wake County, N. C., at the locality now known as the new town of Wendell, on the Norfolk and Southern Railroad. This man was W. W. Nowell, my honored father. He was an humble, unpretentious man, and was never known, perhaps, but slightly outside of his own county. His education was limited to simple reading, poor writing, and a slight knowledge of figures. Yet he was a man of good, sound mind and fair judgment. He was highly respected by all who knew him, as an honest, upright, Christian gentleman.

This poor farmer, my father, married Miss Elizabeth Rhodes, daughter of Jeremiah Rhodes, the progenitor of nearly all the Rhodeses now in this part of our State.

Soon after the aforesaid marriage, my father and his bride, instead of taking a foolish trip to some famous part of the world, as many poor people do nowadays, concluded to settle down and go to work, as all the honest and industrious young men did in those far-off days of frugality and contentment. So he bought about one hundred acres of land in the piney woods, selected a suitable place on a slight ridge, between two small brooklets, or branches, and proceeded to build a house, or rather two houses. For in those primitive times, people had a living house, or, more correctly, a bed-house, and a kitchen, some thirty or fifty feet apart. These houses, that is, my father's houses, were very simple and unpretentious buildings. They were built of logs and covered with boards, four or five feet long, rived from the long-leaf yellow pine, that was so common at that time and place. The chimneys were of the stick-and-dirt style, but answered

every purpose, and were comfortable with their wide fireplaces, wherein oaken logs in winter burned and crackled so merrily. The kitchen fireplace was still more commodious, being so wide that the lads and lasses could stand or sit in the "corners," as we called them, and have a good time, while the kind mother was boiling the pot, hung on a potrack, baking corn bread on a griddle that turned on a pivot, or biscuits in a "spider," which was a small oven with a handle. And sometimes in the winter she roasted sweet potatoes in the hot embers.

This particular kitchen of which I am thinking, my mother's, was, in my estimation, a dear and cozy old place. It stood east and west with the chimney at the eastern end. In the corner to the left of the fireplace were kept the various cooking utensils. And just back of that, near the door, some shelves were placed four or five feet from the floor, on which the dishes, washed and dried so nicely, were placed bottom-side up. In the other corner on the same side was the cupboard, or the "milk house," as we called it. That was the receptacle of the milk and butter, and also the cold victuals, so convenient between meals. On the other side to the right of the fireplace stood the spinning wheel, which I can almost fancy I hear now, singing its humming song, as it was whirling so rapidly under my mother's skillful hands, in spinning cotton or wool to be later woven into cloth. In the other corner on the south side was the old loom, in which cloth was made for the family clothing. Under this old kitchen, also, was a cellar to keep potatoes during cold weather instead of in a hill.

The women and children in those days spent the day generally in the kitchen. At night, all the family gathered in the "other," or the "great," or

the "bed-house," as it was variously called. There, a fire was made in winter and in summer. In winter for light and warmth; in summer for light only, as lamps were then unknown to the simple people in the country, and tallow candles were allowed only on rare occasions. Here the early hours of the night were spent in sweet contentment and happiness. The father rested quietly from the arduous toils of the day, the mother hummed a lullaby to the baby, as she rocked the rude cradle with her foot and plied the knitting needles with her fingers to supply warm socks and stockings for the family in cold weather; while the older children prattled in their glee, or played blindman's buff, their bare feet, in the meantime, keeping up a continual pit-a-pat on the naked floor.

In this aforementioned "great house," which, however, had but one room, on the 27th of April, 1837, the writer of this poor sketch of a poor life first saw the light. Just what he then thought of that light, and of himself, and of his strange surroundings, I am not able to say, as no record thereof has come down to these later times. Soon the neighbors began to drop in, of course, to see the stranger that had just arrived in their midst, and to congratulate the parents on this fine addition to their growing family, and to examine very closely the kicking prodigy himself, and to make such remarks as they saw fit. But of what was said and done then and there, I know nothing at all, except that another name was written in the old family Bible, and that name was "William Cullen Nowell." I have been asked in these later years of my life if I was named for William Cullen Bryant, the famous poet. My answer was, that my humble parents never heard of the poet Bryant, or of any other poet, except David the Psalmist, and perhaps Watts, Wesley, and Rippon. Suffice it to say that

I had an uncle of that name that had moved to Tennessee before my advent, and I suppose I was named for him. In a few weeks, at most, this news of the neighborhood died out, as all such ordinary news will, and matters and things moved on in the same old ruts as before. The family that the stranger had come to see and tarry with for a season had resumed their wonted duties, and the baby kicked, crowed, or bawled, according to his various humors and caprices.

For the next seven years, or thereabouts, that little boy increased in weight, if not in wisdom, and was said to be a fine, rosy, and thriving lad, with comely looks and full of promise. During this happy period of my life I can recall but two events. One was a visit to our home of my uncle Cullen, my namesake. He rode horseback all the way from Tennessee, on a large, muscular horse, with tremendously big feet. This was a frequent topic of conversation in the family circle for the next five or six years. The other event was the birth of my youngest brother, Robert.

But during my seventh year, an epidemic of scarlet fever raged in our community, and caused widespread alarm and much suffering, and several deaths among the children. It soon made its appearance in our family, when my two older brothers and myself were stricken down. I remember the night when I was first taken sick, but I can recall no more till several weeks afterwards, when my mother carried me in her arms to the kitchen, when, though convalescent, I was almost a skeleton. During this spell of sickness, I sank so low that all hope of recovery was lost. The doctor said my death was only a matter of time, and a brief time at that. My mother, with her own hands, prepared some simple clothes for my burial suit. For a few days and nights all waited in silence for the

death angel to come and take the trembling spirit away and let the little, emaciated body rest. But God had something for that poor little boy to do in the coming years. And so, instead of sending the death angel, He rebuked the fever, and lo, a change began to come over the little patient, and, in the course of some few weeks, he was up and going about again, though not the same plump boy as before, but weak, pale, and unpromising.

During the next ten years, I developed about as bad a case of bashfulness and diffidence as was ever seen, I reckon. This was, in some measure, due to partial deafness caused by the fever. I could not bear to be in the company of any but intimate friends. So I hardly ever went anywhere, not even to school or to church. The very thought of going to school would cause my heart almost to stop. My parents realized the situation and very readily humored me in these things, hoping that a change would take place when I grew older.

During these painful years of deep-rooted timidity, however, I learned to read and write through the kindness of my brothers. But I could not bear for any one, even my father, to hear me read.

During this period of my life, however, I read a great deal—in fact, I read everything I could get hold of. Books of all kinds then were scarce among the simple backwoods people, and newspapers were rare also. But we had a few books which my father bought from a colporter, among them I still remember "Putnam and the Wolf," and the "Fool's Pence." And about this time there came through our community a book agent, the first, I reckon, who had ever been seen by our people, and my father bought from him a "Pictorial History of the World." That was, so to speak, my meat and drink for the next two or three years. I read it through and through. And the knowledge I gained

from that book has been a great blessing to me ever since. There was published in those days also, in the city of Raleigh, a paper known as "The Spirit of the Age." I had access to that, too, and read it with the greatest zest. In that I found the first serial stories I ever saw or heard of, those especially written by "Will Willowill." I believed every character and every word in these stories to be real and truthful. Such a thing as fiction had never dawned on my mind then. All this reading I did quietly and alone, pronouncing all new and strange words after my own taste. And here I made some ludicrous mistakes, as I learned later. For instance, I knew how to pronounce promise. But about 1850, I frequently read in the aforesaid paper about the famous compromise. I very naturally thought that promise with com before it ought to be pronounced the same as without it, and so placed the accent on the second syllable. Again, the word certain was very familiar and its pronunciation undoubted. So when I met with that word with the prefix as before it, I, of course, let the accent remain on the syllable cer. When I learned later that other people pronounced these words differently, I was horrified at their dense ignorance, until I discovered, to my dismay, that the ignorance lay at my own door. It may be interesting to speak here, also, of the habit, if I may so call it, of credulity that I formed in my early years. I firmly believed every word I read or heard. Having been brought up among honest and truthful people, I had no idea of anything like deceit and falsehood. In later years, while at school, the boys soon found me possessed of this way of thinking and feeling, and so would play on me some funny tricks. It took me a long time to learn the sad truth, that the world is hollow and deceitful, and false in a large measure.

I now come to another period of my life from my eighteenth to my twenty-fourth year, extending over about six years, which may be considered my school days, and also my initial religious life. With all my native diffidence, I had a strong thirst for an education. And it so happened, about the beginning of this period, that we had a teacher in our school district who was an acquaintance of our family, and who boarded at our house. My father had, just previous to this, built a new house. This house was of hewn logs, covered with shingles, and had a substantial rock chimney. It also contained three rooms—one main room, one shed room, and one little room at the end of the piazza. So I felt like I could bear to go to school to him, as he was well acquainted with my peculiarities, and knew how to humor me. During this term of school, which lasted only a few months, I made rapid progress. The next year, we had another teacher who had lived all his life in our midst, and so I went to him. Then my father sent me to another school for a few months, in an adjoining district. In all I think I got about seven months schooling in this way. I then concluded to teach in our old home schoolhouse. First, I taught and entered school for a few months. Then I was asked to get a certificate and take the public school for the next term. I stood the examination, got the certificate, and taught the public school all right. Several others took the examination on the same day with me. Such an examination as we took then would, at this time, be considered almost, if not quite, a farce. I remember well a sentence in Smith's English Grammar, which was given us to correct and parse. I had learned that grammar pretty well as far as syntax. And I had studied this latter part of the book very attentively by myself at home. And I had paid particular attention to that very

sentence. It was, if I remember rightly, as follows: "Him being won or lost, all this will soon follow."

That sentence passed nearly all around the room, and all failed on it signally, till it reached me. I very readily corrected it and parsed it correctly. It was really amusing to hear some of those young men try to parse. Some of them made the word "won" a numeral. I changed "him" to "he" and gave the rule, and parsed, giving all the rules or reasons. The examining committee also asked us to divide one dollar by one mill. I got that correctly and they told me I had it right, and the answer was one thousand dollars. I was surprised, of course, at what he said was the result. But I dared not question what so wise a man should say. But now I think he made a very grave mistake, as he should have said one thousand mills instead of dollars.

I was now a young man of some importance in the community, and of considerable promise. Though I was still frail and feeble as to health, weighing about 120 pounds, I had so far overcome my bashfulness as to be able to go in company with my equals in the neighborhood, and to enjoy the society, even, of ladies, which was a wonder to myself as well as to others. About this time, however, I can remember one little incident that I can never forget, on account of what followed a few years later.

I was going along the road, one day in the week, on some errand, not being accoutered in my Sunday best, when I met a very finely dressed young lady. We were slightly acquainted, but I had never been in her company to speak of. I gave her a wide berth, as the saying is, and was so overcome with bashfulness, that I could hardly salute her in the most commonplace fashion. That lady

was Miss Sue Williams, who some time afterwards became my wife.

Strange things sometimes happen. If an angel from heaven had told me on that day that that elegant, beautiful, and stylishly dressed woman was destined to be my future bride, I could not have believed it. That looked like the last and most unlikely thing that ever could happen.

In this same period of my life's history, which I am now discussing, began, also, my religious experiences, which have been developing ever since. My parents were very pious and godly people. They were both members of the Baptist church at old Hepzibah, near our home, and had been from their youth. My Uncle Mark Nowell, who lived close to us, was a sort of lay preacher, and considered by all the neighbors a very model Christian. My older brothers and my two sisters, and also my many cousins at Uncle Mark's, had joined the church previous to this time. I had the most profound respect for all things religious. Such things were so solemn and awful to me that I could not bear to think of them scarcely, much less to speak of them to any one.

I was religiously inclined from a child, but no one knew the least thing about it but myself, and I dared not own it even to myself. As to the real fundamentals of religious doctrine, I knew almost nothing. My parents, though pious and exemplary Christians, were very reluctant and backward to teach gospel truth to their children, as others were then and are today. So, nearly all the religious influence I received from them was that which came through their example and not from verbal teaching. That, however, was pure and unalloyed.

Family worship was rare in those days, at least, in our part of the country. My father read the New Testament aloud sometimes, and both he and

my mother sang hymns occasionally. Sunday Schools were introduced into our neighborhood during my early childhood, and even they did not amount to much. About all the preaching we had in those early days was hortatory, and not very instructive. I remember I read a little in the Testament in those early days, but I dared not let any one see me, I was so timid, especially in regard to religious matters. So the truth is, people generally at that time had but little Bible knowledge, and I had less than most others. But when I was about nineteen years old, Rev. J. S. Purifoy, of Wake Forest, became pastor of Hepzibah church. As he was an educated man, of course we began to have more instructive preaching. Up to this time I had attended church services very little, and had gained but little in either knowledge or impressions. But now I began to attend regularly, and paid the utmost attention to all that was said and done.

My interest in the church services deepened gradually, till I was really glad when the monthly meeting came around. My father noticed this and ventured to ask me, one Sunday evening, if the service seemed to be long and tedious. I told him I never grew tired of the church service. Along in the summer of that year, which, I think, was 1856, I began to desire above all things to be a Christian. I wanted to be prepared to sit with the brethren at the Lord's Table. I remember well, on a certain Sunday, it was the communion service. I, like the rest of the outsiders, went out, when the benediction was pronounced, for all to leave the house who wished to do so. I went, not because I wanted to, but because I feared the people might suspect my feelings on the subject of religion. And while out, I went round near to the window, where I could be near enough to hear and see, at least, some little of what was going on, in what I considered the

most beautiful service in all the world. They sang a hymn. I don't know what it was; but it had a sort of refrain—"Jesus died for me," which I felt as deeply as any of those in the house around the table, I reckon.

Well, says some one, if you felt that way about it, why did you not go and unite yourself with the church, and thus be one of the members, and so be able to partake of the Lord's Supper? Well, I will tell you. I thought then, like everybody else, that we all had to go through a process of getting religion, and that there had to be a time and a place and a manner, or the thing could not be accomplished. The time was when a revival of religion was in process. And so I wanted to see a revival above all things, and yet, on account of my timidity, I dreaded it above all things. And the place was at the "mourner's bench" in the house of God. And that I dreaded, but longed for still. And the manner was to weep and wail and pray, as best we might, until we could feel some thrill of inexpressible joy, or else, and better still, be able to see some seraphic vision that would make the matter so sure, we could never have a doubt as to our acceptance with God. Well, in the fall of that same year, the revival came, sure enough. It came down from heaven. The brethren did not have to "get it up." It just came anyhow. It was God's time of refreshing. The time was not appointed, as it is often done nowadays. The preacher for the occasion was not invited to come with all the best methods available. No; it was not man-made. It was a Pentecostal revival sent down from heaven. The Holy Spirit was there in power. Christians were happy, and sinners were being cut to the heart by the score.

The meeting lasted about three weeks, day and night. The preachers were J. S. Purifoy, L. B.

Horton, Mark Nowell, and Jephtha Layton. All, we might say, home preachers. They had a splendid band of singers. Among whom I remember very distinctly, William Daniel Scarboro, who was the leader, and who died so sadly a few years later, in that dreadful "War between the States." He was a son of Deacon Daniel Scarboro, and brother to J. C. and Chas. W. Scarboro, who are living at this time, and greatly beloved by the people. There were at times as many as forty or more mourners at the front at one time. The deep wailing and praying of the penitents could be heard for nearly a quarter of a mile. The singing, though as loud as possible, could not drown the solemn, sad crying of those at the "anxious seats." It was not possible to hear the calm preaching of the pastor, when the meeting was in full blast. But L. B. Horton, with stentorian voice, would now and then mount on a bench out between the mourners and what few sinners were brave enough to stand aloof, and exhort them in his plaintive and tremulous voice, that, once heard, could never be forgotten. He would tell them sometimes that they must be glued to their seats. Some of the penitents sat on the seats and leaned their heads on the back of the seats, some kneeled by their seats, and some lay prostrate on the floor.

Well, here was the time and the place I had longed for. And as I was one whose heart was opened, at least, I did not stand aloof from the good work. I felt like I couldn't bear it all, but I could not stay away. I was a true seeker before the meeting began. I was too diffident to make a move. Some one saw my condition and went to me and asked me to go to the front. I was really glad to go. I don't know till this day who carried me up. Now I was at last a true mourner at the mourners' bench; and for about three days and

nights I did all I could do, hoping and praying to feel the thrill of inexpressible joy, or to see the vision, or to hear the voice, which I had been taught in the hortatory preaching, I had so often heard, and which had made such a lasting impression on my mind, that I concluded it must be so. But what I sought so diligently for never came as I had hoped. God's ways are not our ways. This, however, I did find. The burden was gone at last from my heart. I knew not how it went, nor when. A calm, sweet peace and a great love filled my heart. The singing was inexpressibly sweet. I peeped up and saw the faces of the brethren. They were almost heavenly in their, to me, new beauty. I felt I couldn't sit or kneel there any longer. So I got up and did as I felt prompted. I was happy, and that was about all I did know. I smiled, I laughed, and that was the first time I had even smiled since the meeting commenced.

Soon they closed for the day and we all started, as usual, for our homes. Before, I had kept along with the crowd or lagged behind; but this time I felt so happy and so light that I blushed to find myself about twenty yards ahead of all the rest. I wanted to see my mother. Well, I had made an open profession of religion, I had openly confessed Christ before men, and that was all, I suppose, there was to do. My religious life had begun in earnest. At the next regular monthly meeting, which was not long after the close of the revival, I and one hundred and nine others were baptized in old Buffalo Creek, near the church where I, in later years, baptized hundreds of other people. That was to me a great meeting. These were great events. This was an epoch in my life. This stands out as one of the never-to-be-forgotten times and places in my life's eventful journey.

That fall and winter passed very happily. We had prayer meetings in the neighborhood and experienced good times in them and at church also. One event during that winter I can never forget, and that was the big snow which fell, I think, in January, 1857. It began falling on Saturday evening, and fell continuously till late Sunday night. The wind blew hard all the time and drifted the snow so that in places it was from three to five feet deep. It was at least two feet deep on a level. During that winter the partridges and some other birds nearly all died; and it was the same with the rabbits. A little of the snow and ice could be seen as late as March in the low and shady places.

That spring I passed through an experience I never can forget, though it is the same experience that every Christian has to pass through sooner or later, I reckon, and with varied intensity. The experience I speak of is the reaction that takes place when a young convert first begins to realize that the old sinful flesh and the old sinful world are still in existence, and that, contrary to his expectation, he can be tempted with evil. This was a sore perplexity to me. I was ignorant, and, in my ignorance, I had believed that to be a Christian was to be always happy and free from the touch and the approach of evil. Old Brother Horton had frequently exhorted the young converts that the warfare would surely come on after a while. But my attitude in regard to that was similar to that of the disciples when the Lord Jesus told them that He was to be put to death and would rise again the third day. I simply didn't believe it as a real fact. But I found, to my dismay, that the warfare was on, or, at least, there was some trouble, which I could not exactly make out. And, as people generally do in distress, I put the worst construction possible on my situation, and con-

cluded that I had made a lamentable mistake in joining the church, when I was not converted. But how to reconcile that with my inmost feelings, I could not possibly divine. I loved the church, and the brethren, and I believed I loved the Lord, though not half so much as I ought; and I was sure I was not my old self in all respects, and what to do under the circumstances I did not know. I was too timid to speak of my troubles and perplexities to any one in the whole world. And so I had to blunder along as best I might in my ignorance. I tried to pray; but the main trouble was, how to reconcile my feelings at that time with what I still vainly thought to be the only true feelings of a truly converted person. That was to me an insuperable difficulty. In that sad dilemma I had access to "Baxter's Saints' Rest," a good book which I thought might help me; but it only involved me in still deeper trouble. For in that book the author gave a most vivid description of a sinner under conviction, and also the exceeding joy of one just having passed from death unto life. I felt almost sure that I had never been convicted, and, of course, never converted. I was almost beside myself. This lasted for several weeks. No one, however, had the least idea of the struggle that was going on in my own mind.

At last light began to break on my beclouded vision. It occurred to me that there might be degrees in the intensity of conviction, and, also, in the joy of conversion. And that old Brother Horton's "warfare" was something real, and must be accepted as such. So I concluded that hardened sinners, like the crucifiers of our Lord on the day of Pentecost, might feel as Mr. Baxter had depicted it; but a poor little boy like myself, who had never heard even of much of the vice of the world, and who always had a tender conscience, might be

converted like Lydia was at the riverside, when the Lord opened her heart and she attended to the things spoken by Paul. Thus my difficulties on these points subsided; though I was a little sorry to give up my long-cherished ideas of a happy and peaceful Christian life and to accept that of a belligerent type.

Along about this time in my life's history I had my first young dream of love. There lived an old man near Eagle Rock who had noticed me as a steady and moral youth and had said some very flattering things of me. This good old gentleman had one single daughter, his youngest, and she was very nice and very good-looking. Some of my friends suggested that it would be well for me to pay my respects to her. And so I did. We liked each other and would have married, but for one thing. At this time I was under a strong conviction that God had called me to be a preacher of the gospel. (But more of this later.) And so I wished her to engage herself to me till I could finish my education. This she refused, saying her dead mother had told her never to make a long engagement. Had we married then, the whole course of my life would have been changed. I should have been a poor, uneducated preacher, and a very poor farmer without muscular force to do the work. Man proposes, but God disposes. That lady is still living, so her name is withheld.

As was hinted above, I had now strong impressions to enter the ministry. This soon became known among my friends, and finally got to the ears of our pastor. He encouraged me and had me to lead in public prayer, and to hold prayer meetings in the neighborhood. I tried hard to do as he wished me to, but now I had a cross sure enough. For how one so timid and so diffident could ever so far overcome these things as to stand before con-

gregations and preach the gospel was a question that seemed hard to answer. I spent a whole year, I suppose, studying and praying over that one thing. At last I gained courage enough to face my neighbors in prayer meeting, and so concluded to ask the church for license to "exercise my gifts," as the matter was expressed in those days. This was very readily done, and so my life-work was determined upon. Elder Purifoy now advised me to go to school, and prepare to do my work more efficiently. This I was willing to do, but had not the means to do so. However, through his influence, I was received as a beneficiary of the Board of Education of the Baptist State Convention, and thus the way was opened for me. This was about the beginning of the year 1858. In the summer of that year I was sent to Clayton, N. C., where I was placed under the care of Rev. W. B. Jones, who taught a preparatory school at that place. Under his wise management and tuition, and that of his excellent wife, Mrs. Delia Wight Jones, who was his superior in intellectual attainments, I made rapid progress. During the next session, in the beginning of 1859 (sessions then lasted only five months), the school was under the care of Prof. T. J. Woodson, who had succeeded Mr. Jones. Under this teacher I studied so hard and learned so rapidly that I overtook a class of young men who had a full year's advantage over me. And so in the summer of that same year I entered Wake Forest College with them.

Here, however, I will pause and give a few incidents of my school life at Clayton. The first thing I had to learn there was, that I was exceedingly green and knew almost nothing, especially of the world of men and things. This, however, was a hard and painful lesson to learn, and cost me many a blush of shame, and many a laugh on the part

of my companions. My main difficulty was, I thought I knew lots.

When I first became a preacher I thought, of course, the proper thing to do was to get me a preacher's hat, a regular bee-gum silk, or beaver hat. This was very natural, because Elder Purifoy and old Uncle Mark both had such hats. This displayed my ignorance, as well as my vanity, which was not at all becoming, and was at the same time the innocent cause of many a smile and much ridicule on the part of more mature and more sensible people.

While under Mr. Jones, during the first session, I was asked by him to go to Pine Level and fill an appointment for him on a certain Sunday. I very readily consented to do so. Therefore at the appointed time I donned my best clothes and placed the silk hat, having been well smoothed, on my head and sallied forth, in company with Mr. Jones, to the depot, to take the train. Now I had never been on a railroad train or car of any kind in my life. And strange to say, I had never noticed anything much about such things during my brief stay at Clayton. So when we got to the depot and the train had pulled in, Mr. Jones had some business with the mail agent and went to the baggage, or mail car, to attend to it, while I followed at his heels. I don't reckon I had ever heard of a ticket at that time, but thought, of course, the thing to do was to climb unceremoniously into a railroad train, as one would into a cart or wagon, at the first convenient place one should happen to strike. So as there was a big door in the side of this particular car, I made a mighty lunge and sprang into it, silk hat and all, steps or no steps. The mail agent looked about as blank as if an alligator had flopped into his car. As I saw no special place to sit down and be comfortable, I walked very leisurely into

the next car, in which I found plenty of seats, some of which were occupied by colored people, who seemed to think me a slave trader, or something of the kind. I took my seat, however, with as much dignity as I well could, thinking rather singular that no white people were traveling on that occasion. Pretty soon Mr. Jones came to the window of the car and beckoned me to go back to the next car. I did so, and at last found the right place for a white man to sit down. After the train had moved on, I had a painful feeling to come over me, which seemed to say: "You have played the fool with your silk hat on."

On another occasion during that same session I had a narrow escape from a terrible danger. My room was in the basement of what was then known as Mr. Jones's brick house, having one door leading into the back yard. Out in the garden was a hill of sweet potatoes, to which we had access when we needed any to roast at night in our rooms. He also had two real bull-dogs which stayed in the back yard. One night I concluded to go and get some potatoes, thinking that the dogs knew me and would not bother, or perhaps that I could give them the slip. So I got the potatoes and was returning to my room, when, just before reaching the door, I saw to my horror, that one of the dogs was close behind me and hastening to me as silent as the night itself. I made a rush to the door and slammed it behind me just in time to save myself. I have always counted that a providential escape. That was my last trip to the potato hill.

During the second session, I and several boys boarded at Col. W. H. McCullers', a little less than two miles up the railroad from Clayton. He had but one child then old enough to attend school, and that was a little girl named Ella. The other boys walked so fast that she could hardly keep up; and,

besides, they seemed to have neither care nor thought for her. I noticed all this, and concluded to take care of her, even if we had to forego the company of the other boys. And so it became our custom to go and come together. She was sometimes wayward, though generally lovely. I took pleasure in caring for her, though at times it cost me self-denial. I remember once we were out under the shade of a tree at the noon recess, and she fell asleep. I placed her head on my lap and sat thus until the bell rang. She was a little sister to me, and I loved her dearly. After leaving that school and going to Wake Forest, I never saw her but once, and that was on the platform of the Clayton depot, one day as I was passing on the train. She saw me and waved her hands in great delight. The next time I heard from her she was dead—died of diphtheria. Her memory is dear to me yet. And the question often comes to me in regard to her as to many, many others: Shall we meet again in the beautiful realms of light to part no more forever? Those were sweet and happy days, and I love to think of them, and to see again in fancy the faces of loved ones smiling from behind their shadows.

In the summer of 1859 I entered Wake Forest College. This was an event in my life. I entered, however, under difficulties, as I had had but one year's preparation in Latin, Greek, and Algebra. The professor in Latin told me I would have to make up some part of Virgil, as I had not read any of that. I agreed to do so; and for once in my life I used a "pony," as the boys called a translation. One of them let me have a translation of Virgil, and with that I could soon get up a hundred lines. I read a few lessons in that book, and, as I read it so glibly and translated so well, the professor told me not to bother any more with that. And by hard

study I kept up with the class, and always took first grade marks in all studies.

My college days were delightful all through with one exception; and that exception will stand out for all coming time in history as the "great Civil War between the States." The rumblings of that awful storm had been heard as Prof. Wm. Royall said, ever since 1820. And at last, after long delay, it fell on our beloved country in the midst of my school days. Almost everything was disorganized; people went wild with the war fever, and one woman said she wanted to be three men and take an active part in the struggle. Of course the excitement of the times hindered us in our studies. Many of the young men left and volunteered to enter the army. Finally, in 1862, the college had to suspend on account of the first conscription law, which took all young men from eighteen to thirty-five years of age. That took me. So I went to Camp Holmes, near Raleigh, in obedience to the call. Here I will state that I did not wish to enter the army. I wanted to live and be a preacher. And as my health was frail, I did not believe I could live but a few months under the hardships of camp life; and I fondly hoped the doctor in charge would give me an honorable discharge on that account, or on account of my partial deafness.

And now I will relate what has ever since seemed to me a clear case of special providence. Soon after we got into camp, one of the doctors got us in line and asked all who could write well to step out. A great number did so. I did not at first. But a friend of mine by my side asked me to step out also, and after being urged by him to do so I stepped out with the others. The doctor soon came along taking the handwriting of each one, and when he came to me I wrote my name and remarked to him that I was a little deaf. He looked

at me a moment and said he would take me to be his secretary, and to be in his office next morning. Now why did he take me? I was excited and timid, and never could write a pretty hand. Surely some higher power moved that doctor to decide as he did. Well, I wrote for him a few days, and one morning, on entering his office, he very kindly told me that they had dispensed with my part of the work, and would not need me any more. I was dumbfounded and silent. I expected nothing then but to go on to Richmond, as I had seen others sent on who were as frail as myself and some as deaf. But the young doctor for whom I worked said to the older one, "We had as well give this man a discharge, as he is deaf somewhat." The old one said, "Yes." I took the paper and haven't seen that camp since.

In 1863 I was married to Miss Sue Williams, that fine lady I mentioned on a former page, and to whom I was afraid almost to speak. This appeared then to be a rash act under the circumstances, but I thought I was following the leadings of providence. We lived together about thirty-five years, and, though we were sometimes in straitened circumstances, the Lord always opened the way for us in due time.

Soon after our marriage I was ordained to the full work of the gospel ministry at old Hepzibah Church, my mother church. In the autumn of that same year, 1863, we went to Clayton to live, and where I taught a small school for the balance of the war period. While living there I went up into Virginia and spent two months as army missionary while the soldiers were in winter quarters. I found the regiment which I was appointed to serve at Taylorsville, between Richmond and Hanover Junction. This was a small railroad station, near which the soldiers were spending the winter

in log huts. There were no chaplains or ministers of any kind in the regiment at that time except one Lutheran. I soon found the men had no confidence at all in him. There was a good brick church building in the village, and we got permission to use that for night services, the soldiers furnishing candles for light. In that building I preached almost every night while I remained with them. The meetings were well attended, and we had a regular revival all the time. There I did my first baptizing in a river near by. After the spring began to open, I saw that the army would soon have to start out in the campaign, and so I concluded to return home. A large number of the men followed me to the depot and wept like children when we had to part.

We remained in Clayton till Sherman's army passed through and the war ended. It would be too long a story to try to tell a tenth part of what we saw and suffered and the hardships we experienced during those dark days of 1865. Suffice it to say that we passed through it all, without personal injury or violence. Indeed it seemed that we were under the special care and protection of the Heavenly Father. We were exceedingly glad when the last soldier of that dreadful army had passed, and we were safe and well.

From that time down to the present I wish to speak of my work and the times in which we lived in sections. The first section is, of course, the reconstruction period. At the beginning of this dark and unsettled period, we lived at a small village in Johnston County known as Earpsboro. I was soon called to preach at the Lee's Chapel Church in Nash County. This was my first regular pastorate, and it continued quite a long time. In the summer of 1866 a great revival broke out in that church which will long be remembered. It

was a revival sure enough. The church was ripe for it, and the people were feeling its influence weeks before it began. As evidence of this fact, I will give the experience of a man and his wife, as they told it to me after the meeting closed. He was one of the main fiddlers of the community and his wife was a star dancer. They had frequent dances in the neighborhood, and when they were at home alone, on other nights, he would make the music and she would dance. One night, not many days before the revival commenced, he said he was feeling rather serious, and on mentioning it to his wife, he found her in the same state of mind. The preaching day was approaching, and their minds had been stirred by the former preaching, so that the near approach of another meeting caused them to think along that line. But he concluded to have a dance again instead of praying, as he felt he ought. But on bringing out his old fiddle he found one of the strings snapped. That made them both more upset in their minds than before; but he mended it and played awhile, though without pleasure. The next evening on getting his instrument of music, in a sort of daring manner, he found another string broken. He said that was too much for them both, and so they had no dancing that night. And they both concluded then that they would give up that sort of pleasure and try to do better. In this state of mind they came to the meeting. And during the first sermon I could hear a woman crying in her distress in the rear end of the house. At the close an invitation was given for any who wished the prayers of God's people to come forward, and the first one to come was that fiddler's dancing wife. She was soon happily converted, and during the meeting her husband also, with a multitude of others.

During this same meeting there was another man in the community who was considered the hardest case of all. He would not attend. His neighbors would pass by every day on their way to church and ask him to go with them. His excuse was that he did not have time. One morning several of them agreed to make him an offer to pay back every day he lost by attending the meeting. On hearing the proposal he saw no way to get round it, and concluded to go. In a few days he was numbered with the converts. He then told his friends he would not take the work they had offered, saying that he was already paid.

I can never forget old Lee's Chapel. There I baptized hundreds of people; and there I enjoyed some of the sweetest experiences of my life. I remember them now with pleasure and pray for them daily, though many of them whom I served and baptized are gone to their rewards.

During this same period I also served the churches of Hepzibah and Poplar Spring. The first of these, my home church, I served many years, and held many good meetings, and baptized many people. Those were happy days; and I look back upon them now with the sweetest joy of my life. At Poplar Spring we likewise had many good meetings. At one of them I baptized seventy-five persons, among them some of the most prominent people in Franklin County.

But now let us consider the times. They were hard. The people were slowly recovering from the calamities and losses of the war. Almost everything had to be readjusted to the new times and conditions. Farming had to be done generally on other and better principles than formerly. This turned out to be a blessing. New laws brought about new modes of carrying on mercantile business. Government, politics, and political parties

all had to be reconstructed; even schools and churches were not totally free from these transmutations; and it was at least ten years or more after the close of the war before matters and things got settled down to smooth running again. One of the saddest features of this period was the state of political animosity that ran high and stirred up bad feelings among neighbors, and sometimes relatives. This was especially bad in the churches. A preacher who dared to hold radical political views could not get a hearing, and was virtually proscribed by the mass of the white people. This condition of political hatred was due mostly to that egregious blunder the Congress of the United States made in giving the suffrage to the ignorant negroes, who were totally unfit for the privilege, and would of course always vote against everything that was best for the white people of the South. I am thankful that those things are now matters of history.

Another one of the dreadful fruits of these evil times was bands of robbers who infested certain localities and carried on their bold depredations in a high-handed manner. These were mostly white men of a low type, who feared neither God nor man. One band of them operated for some time in Nash and Franklin counties. The country was then in a state of semi-lawlessness, and so some of the leading citizens rose up and captured the leader and some others of this band without warrant or process of law, and the Governor of the State sanctioned the proceedings and had them condemned to prison for ten years. The leader served his term and returned home a converted and a better man. I knew him well afterwards as a member of one of my churches, and he was well thought of.

We now come to the most terrible outgrowth of these unsettled times, and that was the Ku Klux Klan. The general government seemed to make more of the negroes than of the white people of the South. That made the former impudent and encouraged them in that impudence; and, of course, it enraged the high-minded white people almost beyond endurance. And to make matters worse, a great many adventurers from the North came down South to grow rich, or at least to better their financial conditions. These sided with the colored people and such white men as agreed with them in the politics of the day, and thus encouraged the ex-slaves in their insolence. Many and awful crimes were committed by the negroes on the helpless white people. I say helpless because the white men being in a large measure disfranchised, the negroes and their party friends were in most of the offices, and so justice could not well be meted out against a negro rapist, nor one guilty of any other crime. So in such a state of things there rose up, as it were out of the darkness, a terrible society of prominent white men, who came and went as ghosts, and often fell upon the unsuspecting criminal, and he was no more. Or if his crime was not so heinous as to merit such summary proceedings, he was whipped so severely that he was afraid to repeat even the slightest crime. And thus, by these awful proceedings, which fell thick and fast on the impudent and vicious perpetrators of crime in every locality, a fear of dire punishment put a check on evildoers and gave the better minded people time to think and plan for better things.

This dreadful secret order may be perhaps condemned severely by all historians, but it was simply the natural outgrowth of the times. It was to protect the innocent, and especially the innocent women, from violence, which could not well be pre-

vented or punished under existing conditions. The object of the order was similar to the Knights of the Middle Ages, one of whose duties was "to right poor ladies' harms" (Shak.). And again its object was the same as the Holy Vehme, which was a dreaded secret society that existed in the eastern part of Germany for many years. (See Scott's *Anne of Gierstein*). All these secret political societies rose because there was a pressing need for them, did their work, sometimes abusing it, and, when their work was done, passed away.

The next period may be termed the period of reconstructing the reconstructed. It was a time of undoing some things and adding others which were needed for the new or changed conditions. This period lasted till the elimination of the colored vote. During these years I lived in Johnston and Nash counties, and served a number of churches in these and some other counties. And as my family was somewhat large, and the salaries offered by the churches were small and irregularly paid, I was compelled to do other work nearly all the time to help out. This work was teaching, farming, and selling books. That made it very hard on my strength, which never was at all robust. I now look back upon those years of my life and wonder how I ever did hold up under it all. In 1880 we moved back to Clayton again. There I was engaged in school work for about five years. The most of the time I was assistant teacher with Rev. J. M. White. Those were pleasant years. I enjoyed the work so much. But in the midst of it all we had our first great sorrow there, when our oldest boy died of typhoid fever. I remember distinctly many of the pupils in school there at that time. Among others Mr. White's two sons, John E., and Bruce. Bruce was as good as he could be, but John E. was as bad as boys ever get to be. It

is an old saying that when a bad boy becomes truly converted he makes an exceedingly good and useful man. This has been verified in this case. For that once bad boy in Clayton is now Dr. John E. White, of Atlanta, Ga. The Lord can do wonders. When He wanted a man who could by grace become the chiefest of the apostles, he chose Saul of Tarsus, the chief of sinners. When a boy is rude and full of mischief it shows that he is fully charged with life and energy. In other words, it is a sign that he is possessed of vast powers and resources, and when these are directed into right channels, it is not to be wondered at that he should make his mark in the world.

I will mention one other boy in that school, Herman Horne. He was the brightest boy I ever taught or knew. He moved along through books like a man plowing in soft, sandy soil free of roots and stumps. He seldom hitched. The last I heard of him he was high up in the intellectual world; but I have now lost sight of his whereabouts.

While there we had some of the best revivals of religion I have ever passed through. Their memory lingers with me now as a sweet incense from the dear old past. One thing, I reckon, which makes me remember them so distinctly is that they were about the last of old fashioned revivals I have ever seen or enjoyed. For about that time a very perceptible change began to come over everything religious, or at least everything pertaining to the methods of conducting revival meetings. I presume this was caused in a large measure by the appearance, about that time, of what were called evangelists. These men would hold great meetings in towns and cities, and use new and strange methods to get people to make an open profession of religion, so that they might count converts by the hundreds, and thus gain popularity. I do not

say that this was the prime motive of every one of them, but it certainly got to be so after awhile. So a great many pastors of churches in all denominations, wanting likewise to be considered popular revivalists, began to imitate the claptrap methods of these peripatetic evangelists, and so the good old way of holding revival meetings, in which repentance was preached and people were convicted and mourned and repented, and were converted by the Holy Spirit, gradually gave way to the present methods of shallow preaching, shallow conviction, shallow repentance, and shallow conversion, which have filled all our churches with shallow Christians and almost obliterated the lines between the world and the church.

I think we need reconstructing along this line very much indeed. The doors of admission into our churches are open too wide; to get in is too easy. The conditions of membership are too light; and then to get out is too hard. Turning people out of the church has almost gone out of fashion. Too many pastors and churches are like the Methodist preacher who once told those who came forward to join his church, that he was taking them into the church, but if they ever got out, that would be God's business, and he had nothing to do with it.

In 1885 we went to Smithfield to live, where we remained some eight years. While there I served the church in town part of the time, and several others in the country round about. I also taught school some, and worked some three years for the American Tract Society. While there, when I did not have full work, Bro. J. M. Beaty gave me missionary work, at his own expense, in destitute parts of the county. At some of those points churches are now established. He has, I reckon, done more for the Baptist cause in Johnston County than any other living man. When I first knew him he was

a member of the Free Will Baptist Church; and he told me when he became a member of the Missionary Baptist Church that the main thing that led him to the change was that his former denomination was not doing much in the way of missions and education; and as he wanted to do something, he united with those who were working and with whom he could work also.

While living in Smithfield the Charleston earthquake happened. On the night of its occurrence, Dr. Solomon Pool and myself were engaged in a revival meeting in a schoolhouse out in the country a few miles. I had preached that night, and as I was tired, I was sitting down on a chair at the time the two distinct shocks came. The congregation were generally standing at the time singing the closing song. I felt the first shock very sensibly, but never thought it to be anything serious at all. The second shock I thought to be a hog under the house. When we got out in the yard some spoke of the shaking, and we found that some felt it and some did not. But one man said he was out in the yard sitting by a tree, and that the earth itself was shaking. Then we all recognized what it was. On getting back to town I was surprised to see every house well lighted and apparently all the people up, though it was quite late. I asked the first man I saw if anything had happened. He told me that there had been an earthquake or something very serious, and that the people were very much excited. The next night we found a larger crowd than usual at the schoolhouse, and it was not difficult at all to move the people to act along religious lines. We had a good meeting after that, if it did take an earthquake to start it. Some said that they didn't think earthquake religion would do; but I told them the jailer

and his family seemed to be truly converted, and they had earthquake religion.

Some weeks after these occurrences a lady living near town sent for me to go to see her. I went and found her deeply distressed in regard to her spiritual condition. After talking to and praying with her a good while, I told her on leaving that I would see her again on a certain Sunday evening, as I should be in her neighborhood at that time. At my arrival at her home on the day appointed I found her smiling and happy. And among other things, she told me that she certainly must be converted, because she was really glad to see a preacher come to dine with her and to talk with her on the subject of personal religion, for she said that if such a thing had happened a few weeks before she would have been almost overcome with fear and dread. She was another earthquake convert.

In the beginning of 1893 we moved to Nashville, N. C. While there I served the church in Nashville and many others. Also to help out meager salaries I ran a little farm. We remained in Nashville about ten years or a little more; and that time marks the darkest period of my eventful life. My oldest living son began, while we lived in Smithfield, to form bad habits, which bore their full crop of evil fruit while in Nashville. His first bad habit was cigarette smoking. Nothing, it seemed, could be done to check this pernicious practice; and it grew from bad to worse, till he was a perfect slave of the curse of smoking. That, or something, led to drinking. This awful habit bound him with another chain of slavery. Next he took to morphine, which, if possible, was tenfold worse than the others. These things heaped untold trouble upon the hearts of his parents and younger brother and sisters. Evil habits lead to evil deeds, and to

follow evil company. But I forbear to tell all we had to endure on his account; what depths of heartrending misery and trouble we passed through none can ever realize except they pass through the same as we did. At last his poor mother, my once beautiful and happy bride, and who was my ever faithful helpmeet while she lived, sank under her load of trouble, as she was feeble any way, and died in 1898. The darkness and gloom of my life thus became doubled, as I must bear it alone. And in one short week after her burial news reached me, one rainy morning, that my youngest son, my pet, my darling, and the hope of my declining years, was dead and in his coffin at South Rocky Mount, where he worked at night for the railroad company. And the message said, "Come and take him home." At first I was dazed, overwhelmed, and almost senseless. But soon the truth, the sad, the awful, the heartrending truth bore down upon me like a mountain with all its crushing weight. For once I was glad his mother was gone to her grave; for to have seen her grief at that hour would have been unbearable. I went, in company with my ever faithful friend, Major Conyers. The first man I met was the gentleman under whom he had worked. He told me that my boy was the best person he had ever had in his employ in all his life. But here the curtain must fall. It won't do to try to tell what I felt when I knelt at his coffin and looked upon the face of my baby boy cold in death; nor what was the heartrending scene when we reached home and heard the wail of his dear sisters, in this another bitter grief, so soon after their dear mother had gone to her grave; nor that last scene at the cemetery, where it seemed that in that grave was buried all the light and peace of life to me. He was hurt in a wreck on the railroad yards in the night while on duty, and died in two hours.

I thought of Jacob when Joseph's bloody coat was laid at his feet. Surely his grief could not have been much sorer than mine in that calamity. He and his mother sleep now side by side in the cemetery at Nashville, and it can't be so very long before I shall go to them.

After all these sad occurrences my general health became very bad and my nervous system almost failed; but I continued to serve churches as best I could. Finally my only living son, the prodigal, left the State and broke off all intercourse with me, and I gave him up into the hands of the Lord, and so that trouble gradually passed off in a large measure. I don't really know now whether he is dead or alive. It don't seem possible that a loving parent could ever become reconciled to a thing like that, but I have found it to be possible.

Along about the end of this period of my life and the times in which we live, in the year 1902, I became acquainted with a remarkably good Christian lady who was engaged in teaching a school near one of my churches. She was a Virginian and a life-long teacher, as well as an intelligent, refined, and eminently pious woman. I think it was the good providence of God that brought us together at that time. In her genial society, and, after she went back to Virginia, by means of delightful correspondence with her, the light of life came back to me and the burden of distress was lifted from my broken spirit. In 1904 we were married, and ever since she has been to me a solace and almost a ministering angel. I shall never cease to thank God for my "Mary Lacy."

We now come to the present period, which I will denominate the period of expansion. This is a wonderful period in the history of the world, and especially in the history of our own American Republic, which stands out now as the guiding star

of all the peoples of earth, the ideal to which all mankind are tending. What wonderful expansion along all lines the last decade has developed! Agriculture, the basis of all material wealth, is rapidly being revolutionized, and, in a few more decades, will make our nation the granary of the world. Manufacturing along all lines is expanding and developing in a way that astonishes our own people, as well as all the balance of the world. Education of every kind and degree is filling the land with schools high and low and offering advantages to all classes of society in a way that our fathers never dreamed of. Wealth also is expanding so rapidly and with such strides that the financial world stands aghast at present results and wonders what the final outcome of such things will be. All transportation agencies are overworked in trying to move the products of farms, forests, factories, and mines. Church and Sunday School work also, especially that department known as missions, are expanding and reaching out to the ends of the earth. Never before has the world seen such activity along these lines. Men, women, and children are all engaged in this work for the spread of the true religion of Jesus Christ and for the betterment and uplifting of the people and nations of the world. The inventive genius of man is also expanding and adding new machines for farm, factory, and shop; and, also new facilities for travel on land and on the sea, and even through the air. Moreover, this inventive genius has brought forth some of its most wonderful productions to facilitate rapid printing and bookmaking, and thus disseminating knowledge throughout the world. And the still more wonderful things, known as telegraphy, with and without wires, and the telephone, by which people may talk across States if not continents.

And what astonishes us more than all this is that all these expansions and truly wonderful things we have been speaking of are now in their infancy or childhood. People who lived one hundred years ago had as little idea of many things with which we are now familiar as we now have of many more which will be common one hundred years hence. There is no limit to improvement, to expansion or invention. The young people of to-day have a brighter future before them than any generation that has ever lived on the face of the earth. Let them fall into line with all that is good and grand and prepare themselves to fill their places with honor in the great battle of life that is to open up before them.

But as I am now seventy-three years of age, these glorious things of the coming years are not for me. I have served my generation as well as I could under the varied circumstances and conditions of my life and time. I am no longer in the active ministry. My work is almost done; and as I drop out my prayer is that many more will be raised up to fill the vacancy, so that the work may go on with increased power and success. As I can now only sit on the declining side of the mountain of life and look towards the setting sun thereof, I wish to flash back to the younger hosts who are marching up the other side these words: "Your country, the world, and your King expect every man to do his duty."

SIX CHOICE SERMONS

SERMON I.

THE SUBSTITUTE.

Text: "For He hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him."—II Cor. 5:21.

The doctrine of substitution runs through all the Old Testament Scriptures from the entrance of sin into the world, which gave rise to man's need of a sin-bearer. It crops out in all the bloody sacrifices and offerings that were instituted by divine authority, and which figure so prominently in all ceremonial worship. In a few places it looms up like mountain peaks with marked prominence. As when the ram took the place of Isaac on Mount Moriah, and when the high priest, once a year, entered the Most Holy place and sprinkled the blood of the sin offering seven times before the mercy seat, and when the scapegoat, on whose head the sins of the people were symbolically placed, was sent away forever into the wilderness. But all these things were but types of the Lamb of God, who, in the fullness of time, appeared as man's true substitute, and took his place, and bore his sins away, and then carried His own blood and sprinkled it before the true mercy-seat in heaven.

It was left to the Apostle Paul, however, to fully elucidate and expound this deep and fundamental doctrine of grace, which rests on the Eternal Rock.

A substitute is a person who takes the place of another to do something, or to suffer in his stead. As a man who goes into the army in the place of his friend, or one who signs a bond is a substitute.

I. The qualifications of a substitute.

1. He must be free from the obligations involved.

(a) A little boy violates the rules of the school and

is brought up for punishment. His older brother loves him so tenderly that he offers to take his place and suffer in his stead; but, on investigation, it is found that this older brother is guilty of the same offense. Had he been innocent it might have been permitted. But one sinner can not substitute for another. (b) Again a man proposes to take his neighbor's place and go into the army for him. But he is found to be under the same obligations to the government as his friend. Had he been free from military duty himself it might have been all right, but he is not free from the obligation involved.

As to our substitute, Jesus the Christ, we find Him entirely free from all obligations on this point. For the obligation involved in this case is freedom from guilt. God the Father was satisfied in this matter, for Jesus was accepted to take the place of His people. And His bitterest enemies failed to find any fault at all in Him.

2. A substitute must become such voluntarily. It can not be right to compel one person to take the place of another, and suffer or do anything in his stead, against his own will. It must be voluntary on his part. And so in the case of our substitute, the compact was entered into voluntarily. Away back in eternity, before the world was, the covenant of grace was confirmed between the Father and the adorable Son, in which the Son of God, of His own free will, covenanted to take the place of guilty man, though yet uncreated, and bear his sins and endure the curse of the law, and thus redeem man from sin and death.

3. A substitute must have the dignity and the ability to fulfill all the conditions involved. First as to dignity. As an illustration, we will suppose a teacher in a high school is compelled to vacate his place for some time on account of protracted -

sickness. A substitute must be found to take his place temporarily. There is in the community a man of high literary attainments, and, perhaps, in some respects, superior to the sick teacher; but, on account of bad habits and ungentlemanly conduct, he has lowered himself in the estimation of the people. It would not be best to put such a man in the vacant chair in the school, because he has not the dignity to command the respect and obedience of the scholars. Again, the king dies and leaves a vacant throne. The heir to that throne is in his minority; so a regent must be found to substitute for the young king till he reaches his majority. It is not best in that case to give the regency to one of the great men of the realm who may have, by bad conduct, lowered himself in the estimation of the people of the kingdom. He would lack the dignity to command their reverence and obedience. A substitute must have all the dignity necessary to fill his place with credit to himself and satisfaction to all concerned.

As to our substitute, we find Him possessed of all the dignity that can be required of Him in heaven, on earth, and under the earth. The angels in heaven worship Him and adore Him as God over all, blessed forever. Satan and all his evil demons fear and tremble in His presence.

II. Ability. A substitute must have the ability or power to do all things required and fulfill all the conditions perfectly.

Under this head we will find illustrations impracticable, as we must deal with matters that require almighty power. By close attention here also we may see clearly the deep and basic doctrines of grace that underlie the Christian's confidence and hope, and make his final salvation doubly sure.

(a) First, then, our Substitute, to fill the conditions, must have the ability to become one of us, by assuming our human nature and becoming a real man among men. This He did. He took not on Himself the nature of angels, but He took upon Himself the seed of Abraham. He conceived for Himself a body in the womb of the virgin by the Holy Spirit, and was born of a woman like His brethren, and became the son of man as well as the Son of God. This no other being could do. The most exalted of the angelic existences could never have become a man as our Saviour did. It was pre-eminently necessary for Him to become one of us that, as our substitute, He might live our life for us as it should be lived, and die in our place the just for the unjust, and thus set us free from sin and condemnation.

(b) Again, He must have the ability to live a sinless life as a man in this sinful world. When He became a human being He placed Himself under the law, moral and ceremonial, and thus obligated Himself to live up to that law in every particular. And this He did. For, though subjected to every species of temptation that Satan himself and wicked men could devise, He came out untouched by evil, and a conqueror in every particular. He was tempted in all things like as we are, yet He was without sin. As our substitute He lived this holy and sinless life for His people. And in the judgment day and in eternity it will be as though we had lived without sin, for we did so live in our substitute.

(c) And in the next place, He had the ability to assume our guilt and make it His own. "He was made sin for us." He became the guilty one in the eyes of the divine law, and was so considered and treated by divine justice. No man or angel can assume the moral guilt of another. He may as-

sume a debt or an obligation to do something for his fellow-man, but to assume the guilt of another requires the power of Deity. In the great day His people will be as free from sin and guilt as the holy angels in heaven, who have never sinned; because Jesus, our substitute, took all our sins upon Himself and put them away forever by His atoning death.

(*d*) Again, He had the ability not only to assume our sins and guilt, but to actually suffer the penalty in our place. The sins of all His people were in reality put upon Him as His own, and the punishment due to us all was concentrated on Him alone. He trod the winepress alone. There was none to help Him. His arm alone brought salvation. It can not be said, of course, that He suffered exactly what His people would have had to suffer without a substitute, but He did really suffer what the divine law considered an equivalent; so that justice was and is satisfied. And the poet beautifully expresses it when he says:

“He dies, he dies, the lowly man of sorrows,
On whom were laid our many griefs and woes;
Our sins he bore, beneath God’s awful billows,
And he hath triumphed over all our foes.”

Yes, He bore our sins, all of them. They were all foreknown, when the covenant of grace was entered into before the world was; and they were all included, and ample provision made for all of them in the life, death, resurrection, and intercession of our divine substitute. He was not only our substitute on the cross, but He was the same in His life, in His death, in His resurrection, and still is and ever will be world without end. The final and eternal salvation of every one of His people is as sure, as the eternal life and glory of their Redeemer is sure. In the covenant of grace

there is and can be no flaw, no weakness, no mistake. God's plans are perfect, both in conception and in execution.

Then as the poet says again :

“How firm a foundation, ye saints of the Lord,
Is laid for your faith in his excellent word.”

(e) In the next place, He had the ability to raise Himself from the dead. The darkest time, so far as God's people are concerned, was that memorable “three days and three nights,” during which the Lord Jesus lay in the silent tomb in the cold embrace of death. All heaven must have been in tears while its music was silent. Satan and his hosts, and all the wicked Jews who hounded Him to the cross and the grave, were in exultation and joy. Their dark counsels had prevailed. The Son of man, on whom all the children of God in heaven and on earth were depending, was in His grave, and that grave sealed and guarded by all the power of imperial Rome. His few faithful disciples were hidden away from their enemies, and in despair. But on the third day, as the rosy light of morning began to gleam on the lofty pinnacles of the temple in Jerusalem, a stream of lightning seemed to descend from heaven, the Roman guard were terrified and became as dead men, the seal of the sepulcher was broken, the stone rolled away, and He, who had lived as Jesus of Nazareth, and had died as a malefactor on the cross, rose triumphant from the grave, a conqueror over sin, death, and hell.

“He lives! He lives, what glorious consolation!
Exalted at His Father's own right hand.”

Yes, He had the power to rise from the dead. And as He lived and died as our substitute, He also rose as our substitute. And as all mankind died

in Adam when he sinned, so all God's children, chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world, virtually rose in Him as their second federal head, and will really rise in his glorious image in the fullness of time. He, the first fruit, we, the harvest in its season.

(f) And as He stood on the brink of that empty grave, as it were, He exclaimed, in words that must have thrilled heaven and earth with joy, "All power is given unto me in heaven and on earth." And in these words He especially meant that He had almighty power to keep and to save all His people, whose substitute He had become, without a single exception. And, moreover, as He is not only their substitute, but their shepherd also, He is under an eternal and irreversible obligation to bring every one of the sheep, whom the Father has put in His charge into the final, upper fold in the New Jerusalem. When the shepherd of old brought the sheep of his charge at eventide to the fold, he stood by the wicket gate and counted, as they passed in, one by one. If all were there, and safe in the fold, the shepherd was satisfied. And so of our shepherd it is written: "He shall see of the travail of his soul and shall be satisfied." "Of all whom thou hast given me I have lost nothing."

Now, in conclusion, we will read the text again: "For he was made sin for us, who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him." Our sins were all transferred to Him as our divine substitute, and He redeemed us from them and removed them as far from us as the east is from the west, never to be remembered any more. So we, his people, were justified and made innocent. But this is not all, as is so strongly expressed in the text. It says we are made the righteousness of God in Jesus Christ our

substitute. Not clothed in righteousness—that would not be enough. A leper clothed in royal robes would be a leper still. Take the leprosy away and cleanse him thoroughly from its pollution, and then all will be well. So God's people are not simply clothed in His righteousness, but made the righteousness of God itself. Christians are one with Christ, as Christ is one with the Father. And thus, in this glorious triple union, the children of God, redeemed by the blood of Jesus are to be higher and more glorious than the angels.

Now, with these blessed truths in our hearts, let us be happy and full of joy. Let it be our highest aim in life to love, honor, and obey our adorable Lord. Let us feel sure that He will do all things for our good. And no matter how dark the way sometimes appears; and no matter how hard our lots may seem to be, let us do as the poet says:

“And so beside the silent sea
I wait the muffled oar:
No harm from him can come to me
On ocean or on shore.

“I know not where his islands lift
Their fronded palms in air;
I only know I cannot drift
Beyond his love and care.”

SERMON II.

“THE KING IN HIS BEAUTY.”

The text is in three parts, and is in Isaiah 33. The first part is, “Who among us shall dwell with the devouring fire? Who among us shall dwell with everlasting burnings?” (verse 14). The second is, “Thine eyes shall see the King in His beauty” (verse 17). The third is, “And the inhabitant shall not say I am sick: the people that dwell therein shall be forgiven their iniquity” (verse 24).

The answer to the question under the first head is, in part, “He that walketh righteously and speaketh uprightly,” showing that the righteous are meant. This is, of course, exactly the reverse of what we would first suppose. But let us look into the deeper meaning of the passage, and see if it is not, after all, in harmony with the fundamental principles of theology and Scripture. God is often represented in the Bible under the figure or similitude of fire. Thus He appeared to Moses in the bush as a flame of fire. Ex. 3:2. And again on Mount Sinai God appeared to Moses and to all Israel in fire. “And Mount Sinai was altogether on a smoke, because the Lord descended upon it in fire: and the smoke thereof ascended as the smoke of a furnace, and the whole mount quaked greatly.” And in Ex. 40:38 we read: “For the cloud of the Lord was upon the tabernacle by day, and fire was on it by night, in the sight of all the house of Israel, throughout all their journeys.” A chariot of fire and horses of fire carried Elijah up to heaven. II Kings 2:11. Again, Elisha’s servant saw the mountain full of horses and chariots of fire. II Kings 6:17. And when Ezekiel saw vis-

ions of God, it was like fire in appearance. Eze. 1:4. Daniel likewise saw one in a vision and his face was as the appearance of lightning, and his eyes as lamps of fire. Dan. 10:6. And in Heb. 12:29 we read: "For our God is a consuming fire." With these texts before us, and especially the last, we may conclude that Jehovah is by nature a devouring fire, so far as evil is concerned; but blissful happiness to the righteous. God, then, may be considered as an element, and that a universal element, which is blessed peace, joy, and happiness to the pure, innocent, and good; but devouring fire to all that is evil. When Satan and his angels fell they found themselves in a lake of fire, because they were sinful. The same element that was before bliss to them was now fire. But, says one, why are we in this sinful world, and all sinners ourselves, too, not consumed? This question is easily answered. Jesus Christ is the mediator between God and His wrath and this world of sinners. And this has been the case ever since Adam fell, and even before that in effect. Because before the world was, God the Father and God the Son entered into a covenant to that effect. So, then, as long as this world stands, and as long as God's purposes are being carried on, Jesus will be the shield, so to speak, that wards off the fire from this earth and all on it. There was a time when the Son left Sodom and Gomorrah unprotected for a moment, and we all know what followed. And this was a warning to all generations. And in the New Testament we read of the great day of God, when the heavens, being on fire, shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat. II Pet. 3:12. So, then, when Christ shall leave the throne of grace, where He now sits as mediator, and takes His seat on the great white throne of judgment, the screen or shield will be taken away

from between this earth and the wrath of Almighty God, and the fire will naturally wrap it in flames. But as the righteous were taken out of Sodom, and the Christians were all enabled to leave Jerusalem, before the awful judgments fell upon those devoted cities, so all God's people will be caught up in the air to meet the Lord coming in the clouds of heaven, before the dreadful flood of fire falls upon the earth.

Now let us illustrate the idea of God's being an element of happiness to the righteous and of fire to the wicked.

Suppose we are walking along the bank of a beautiful mountain stream. And after a while we come to a most charming spot, where shady trees, green grass and blooming flowers intermingle. We sit down on a rock to enjoy the enchanting scenery for a while. All at once we discover a cocoon hanging on a low shrub, where it had been buffeted by wintry blasts for months before. And we notice that this little rough, unsightly thing is beginning to open, and something seeming to be alive is coming out of it. And behold, in a few minutes a butterfly crawls out into the warm May sunshine. In a short time her wings become dry and she spreads them, as if to see whether or not they will serve her in flight. All at once she rises on her soft, brilliant wings of many colors, and floats, a thing of beauty, on the balmy air. Soon she alights on a flower no less beautiful than herself, and seems to be supremely happy in her new life and in this, to her, new world.

Just then a boy appears on the scene with rod and line. He baits his hook and casts it into the brook. In a few minutes he lands a beautiful spotted trout and tosses him on the greensward just under the butterfly. But now we are struck with the contrast. The butterfly seems supremely

happy in the bright sunshine and air, but the fish is dying in agony in the same element. So what is life and joy to the one is torment and death to the other.

So, when the bloodwashed soul of a Christian emerges from the old body, as the butterfly did from its chrysalis, it finds itself in a state of bliss because it is in its native element. For the Christian, and Christ, and God are all in nature one. Or, in the language of Jesus, they are all one. But when the soul of the sinner is removed out of the shielding protection of the mediation of Christ, as the fish was lifted out of the water, it will be in torment, because it will be in and exposed to an element to which it is unsuited, as the fish in the air.

Under the second head the text is, "Thine eyes shall see the King in His beauty." That is, the righteous in heaven, being in his own element, shall be permitted to see the King in His beauty. The King is, of course, God and the Lamb. For we read, in Revelation, that they are the light of the Holy City, the New Jerusalem. The beauty spoken of here has reference to the glory of the King Himself and of all things connected with Him, or all the beauty that is the result of His glorious presence.

To illustrate this point, we will take the sun in our system. The sun is the most glorious object we can see in this life. But every one knows that it is impossible to look upon the sun so as to see his glory and beauty in all its perfection. But to see the sun in his beauty we must look, not at the sun itself so much as upon the effects of the sun in this world. For the sun is the source or the revealer of all beauty. A great deal of the beauty we see is dependent on what we call color. And the sun really makes all colors and all shades of colors

both in nature and art. For it is said that sunlight is composed of seven different colors. When these are all properly mingled together they make white light, as it is called, or the natural light of the sun. For when they are all reflected back to the eye from any object, like snow, that object is white. But when all the rays are absorbed by an object and none thrown back to the eye, then that object is what we call black, as coal, for instance. When only its red rays are reflected from an object, as a rose, we call that a red rose. So all the different colors in nature are the result of the absorbing and reflecting of certain rays of sunlight. And in art, also, all the colors produced by pencil and brush are dependent on the same light of the sun. Then, again, the beauty of symmetry and form are revealed by light. If one should go into an art gallery in the dark hours of midnight, he would see no beauty, though the great hall should be filled with the most beautiful things ever produced by the genius and skill of man. But let the blessed sunlight stream in through the open windows, and lo, what beauty is revealed on all sides!

So, to see the sun in its beauty, then, is to see the sun and all the richness of beauty it creates or reveals.

And in the same way, to see the King in His beauty in heaven, is to see Him and all the glorious beauty which the light of His face creates or reveals in that world, where nothing is defaced by evil, but where all is pure and rich with heavenly beauty. It is in fact a paradise in which all that one sees is surpassingly beautiful to look upon, and in which all that one hears is rich in harmony, music, and love, and in which all that one feels is the result of the beauty of holiness.

So, then, we shall see the King in His beauty.

Under the third head, the text is, "And the in-

habitant shall not say, I am sick: the people that dwell therein shall be forgiven their iniquity." Sickness is the fruit of sin. As there is no sin in heaven, there can be no sickness. The sins of the people shall be forgiven, and they shall be holy. Sickness is the heritage of all on earth to a greater or less extent. The infant in its innocence may be sick, old age with its gray hairs must be sick sometimes. The wicked get sick in their wickedness, the righteous are often afflicted, though walking in the way of God. None are exempt here. The very air is charged with sickness, and the water we drink and the food we eat may carry the germs of sickness to our systems. But in the pure atmosphere of the heavenly home, untainted by evil and unhallowed by sin, there never can be any sickness. Here, when friend meets friend, the first word is, "Are you well today?" But no such language is ever heard in heaven. Heaven's vocabulary has no terms denoting sickness, pain, sorrow, or trouble of any kind. Such things are there unknown. How sweet it will be when the poor, suffering and sorrowing ones of this sin-cursed earth reach that happy abode, where the inhabitant shall never say, "I am sick," but where each one, in the fullness of happiness, shall see the King in His beauty. Amen.

SERMON III.

THE ROCK.

We know of nothing in nature so strong, so solid, and so immovable as a great rock. And as rocks were familiar objects in Bible lands, we need not be surprised to find frequent reference to them in a figurative way. A solid and unfailing foundation in any sense was a rock. Anything strong and safe was said to be a rock. God Himself was spoken of as a rock. The strongest of all conceivable places was called the munitions of rocks.

This sermon will contain four heads, and a different text will be used for each head.

I. First, then, we have the foundation rock. In Matt. 7:24, we have these words: "Therefore whosoever heareth these sayings of mine and doeth them, I will liken him to a wise man which built his house upon a rock." A house built upon a solid rock as a foundation was the safest conceivable. So man's hope of heaven must be founded upon something safe and abiding, and that is Jesus Christ and Him crucified, the only hope of glory. All other foundations are but sinking sand, and will fail in the testing time. Then, it is the first and supreme duty of every one to build his house of hope and Christian character upon the sure and never-failing foundation. And this is done by doing the things He has told us to do in His word. We are to hear and do, and God will take care of us in life, in death, at the judgment, and in eternity. In this land of Bibles, churches, and Sunday schools, all may hear and all may do the things required, so that the soul's house of hope may be founded upon the solid rock of God's word which can not fail. In this case each one must act for himself. Each sinner must repent for himself, and

believe for himself, and follow Christ for himself. Each one must give account of himself. To go to heaven, one must start right. None crossed the flood but those in the ark. None escaped the touch of the death angel in Egypt but those who had the passover blood over their doors. Noah obeyed God and was safe in the flood. The Israelites in Egypt obeyed God, and the angel sent forth to slay the first born in each house passed over them. And all now, who do what Jesus says will find at last their house as safe as Noah's ark, or as the Hebrew's bloodstained house in Egypt. The true Christian begins by building his house upon Christ the Rock.

II. The second head is the sustaining rock. In Ex. 17:6, we read: "And thou shalt smite the rock, and there shall come water out of it, that the people may drink." The Israelites had crossed the Red Sea and had come into a desert country where there was nothing to sustain life. The God who had brought them out of Egyptian bondage by a high hand must give them food and water, or they will all die in the wilderness. He gave them bread from heaven to eat, and told Moses to smite the rock in Horeb, and water came forth out of it so that the people could drink. Thus the rock furnished water for God's ancient people in their journey to the promised land. For the water flowing as a river from that rock followed them in their journeys until they came to a place where there was water. And again, when they reached another place where there was no water, Moses, at God's command, brought water out of another rock. A rock then furnished the means of preserving the lives of the people in the desert. And the apostle Paul says: "That rock was Christ." That is, as the rock furnished natural water for the bodies of the people in the wilderness, so Christ the true rock, of which the rock in Horeb was a type, sup-

plies living water for the souls of true Christians now, who are the real Israel of God, or the true church of which the ancient Israel was a type.

The Israelites in the wilderness, who had to be fed and given drink in a miraculous way, were an example to show us now how God sustains us in a spiritual manner. As the desert had nothing for the bodies of the people to live on, so this world has nothing for the souls of the people to live on. And as the people of Israel would have perished without food and water in the desert, so the souls of people will perish in this world and be lost without the bread of life and the water of life which Christ alone can give. And as the people needed this life-sustaining water every day all through their journeyings, so Christians now need and must have this living water which Christ gives. What a blessed privilege it was to the people then to go to the rock, or to the stream from the rock, and drink! And the privilege to the Christian now is proportionately greater, as the immortal soul is more valuable than the mortal body. For the water of life to us now is free and ever flowing. And, moreover, it is within us a never-failing well of water springing up into everlasting life. By faith and obedience we drink of and are bathed in its life-sustaining floods. And when we leave this life and this world, we will find this same water of life in heaven no longer a stream from a rock, or a well in the heart, but a mighty river flowing from the throne of God and the Lamb, and the tree of life bearing perpetual fruit on each side thereof. Let us be thankful, then, for the water that flows from Christ the Rock.

III. The third head is the rock of protection. In Ex. 33:22: "I will put thee in a cleft of the rock, and will cover thee with my hand while I pass by." Moses wished to see the glory of God. But the

Lord told him that no man could see His glory, or His face, and live. However, as Moses had found grace in His sight, He told him that there was a cleft in a rock, and that He would put him in that and cover him with His hand while He was passing by, and that Moses could see His back parts after He had passed.

The main thought here is the hiding and covering of Moses in the cleft of the rock for his protection. A strong rock affords protection. A shipwrecked sailor on a high rock is safe. A rock fortress, as Gibraltar, is the strongest and safest of all. In the cleft of a rock is the safest of all places to hide in a storm. So the Christian under the cover, or in the cleft, of Christ the rock is and ever will be safe. The Christian in Christ is safe because the Christian is one with Christ, and Christ is one with God; God is supreme over all. None can ever pluck us out of His hand. Then let our prayer as well as song ever be:

“Rock of ages, cleft for me,
Let me hide myself in thee.”

IV. The fourth and last head is: The rock of comfort and peace. In Isa. 32:2 we read: “And a man shall be as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land.” The word man here applies best to the man Christ Jesus. “The shadow of a great rock in a weary land” carries with it the idea of one in need of comfort. A weary land must mean a hot, dreary, desert land. People in the East were and are familiar with both deserts and rocks. Now let us see if we can picture a scene that will fill the conditions here suggested. A traveler is crossing a dreary desert. He has by some means missed an oasis or resting place that he fully expected to reach by high noon. And now it is the middle of

the afternoon, and he is almost exhausted with heat and fatigue. He is becoming discouraged, if not hopeless. Nothing can be seen to offer the least hope of comfort and safety. But after struggling on for another hour, he begins to see something looming up on the distant burning horizon. As he draws nearer he soon learns that it is a great rock, offering comfort and peace to the weary traveler. On reaching it, he finds that there is on the shady side of it a hollow space where a few trees grow, and where there are green grass and fresh flowers, and, best of all, a spring of cool and refreshing water. He is comforted in the shadow of a great rock in a weary land.

In our journey through this life, we often meet with experiences in which we need the shadowing power of Christ our rock, who says: "Come unto me all ye that labor and are heavy laden and I will give you rest." When the world, the flesh, and the devil unite all their forces to harass and to harm us, then it is such a blessing to seek the covert of the great rock in the weary land, in the closet, or in the house of God among the people of God, and there find that comfort and peace the world can neither give nor take away. And when trouble comes, as come it will to all in one form or another, and its waves seem to roll over us and to hide the light of life, how sweet it is to find even then the shadow of the rock, and to read the grand words of the apostle Paul: "All things work together for good to them that love God." And while resting there, we can remember that the trials and sufferings of this life will work out for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.

And even when the shadow of death is enfolding us in its gloomy wings, we can still hide under the covert of the rock, and feel the comfort of these words: "Oh, death, where is thy sting; oh, grave,

where is thy victory?" The sting of death is sin. But Jesus bore our sins for us and buried the sting in His own heart. And He rose again victor over sin and death, with the keys of death and of hell in His hands. So by His death and resurrection and ascension and intercession he has robbed death of its sting and the grave of its gloom. So, when we come to die, may each one sing with Ten-nyson :

"Sunset and evening star,
And one clear call for me!
And may there be no moaning of the bar
When I put out to sea.
But such a tide as moving seems asleep,
Too full for sound and foam,
When that which drew from out the boundless deep
Turns again home.

"Twilight and evening bell.
And after that the dark!
And may there be no sadness of farewell
When I embark.
For tho' from out our bourne of Time and Place
The flood may bear me far,
I hope to see the Pilot face to face,
When I have crossed the bar."

SERMON IV.

SAVED FROM SIN.

Text: "Thou shalt call His name Jesus: for He shall save His people from their sins."—Matt. 1:21.

The word Jesus means saviour. Hence we may read, "Thou shalt call His name Saviour." The object of the Saviour in coming into this world was to save His people from their sins. His people are, in the simplest way to express it, those who believe on Him and obey Him. In John 1:12 we read that He gave power to become the sons of God "even to them that believe on His name." In Heb. 5:9, we have these words: "He became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey Him."

In discussing this subject, I shall try to show how a sinner is saved. In other words, I want to give the steps or processes of the work. And in these several steps it will be shown that, in some respects, the sinner becomes a co-worker with God.

The first step is hearing the word. Ephe. 2:8: "By grace are ye saved through faith." Grace, then, is the cause. Faith, the instrumental cause. Faith, then is a necessity. But how does faith come? Rom. 10:17: "So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God." So, then, the sinner must hear the word of God. For he can not believe on one of whom he has not heard. The first step, then, is to hear the gospel. Hence Jesus said preach the gospel to every creature. The great duty of the church, then, is to have the gospel preached to all people. No sinner can ever be saved who knows nothing of the gospel. This is the "power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth." The knowledge of the gospel gen-

erally comes by hearing it preached. This is the great and the general means. But it may come through reading, or hearing it talked of in the home, or by the wayside. It is the highest duty and privilege of every one to hear the gospel for himself. He owes this to himself. No one can hear for another. The first step, then, is to hear.

The second step is conviction. This is pre-eminently the work of the Holy Spirit. The sinner is spiritually dead in trespasses and sins. The Spirit of God must quicken the sinner's spirit and enable him to feel and realize himself a guilty sinner before God. Ephe. 2:1: "And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins." Now, what is conviction? Let us see if we can't get the simplest possible definition of this word, and this work of the Spirit of God, that comes through the preaching of the gospel. It is, in its simplest form, a serious and anxious feeling in regard to one's own spiritual condition. Again, it is a realizing of one's state spiritually as being bad or dangerous. This the sinner in his dead state spiritually could not do without the quickening of God's Spirit. This conviction, however, may vary in intensity, in different people, and under different circumstances.

The conviction of the wicked Jews on the day of Pentecost was intense. They were cut to the heart. And in their distress they cried out: "Men and brethren, what shall we do?" Acts 2:37. These were great sinners. They had crucified Jesus, who was both Lord and Christ. Now, when a man wakes up from a spell of hard drinking, and comes to realize that he had, while in that state, murdered his own wife, would not his feeling, on realizing this, be much more intense than if he had committed some slight offense? These men really thought, in their ignorance and under their lead-

ers, that they were crucifying a disturber of the peace. But now, on hearing Peter's preaching, they become convinced, through the Spirit of God, of the awful mistake they made, and of the awful crime they had committed, and their revulsion of feeling is so great that they are constrained to cry out.

But when this same apostle Peter preached, on another occasion, to Cornelius and his friends, their sensation of conviction was of a gentle or mild type, which made no demonstration whatever; yet they were as truly converted as those at the Pentecostal meeting. So, then, when a great sinner is awakened, we may expect intense conviction as a general thing; but with one whose life has been of a good, moral type, we may as a general rule, find a gentle or mild type of conviction. So much for different people.

Again, circumstances have much to do as to the degree of intensity in conviction. The jailer was awakened by an earthquake, both from his natural sleep and from his spiritual sleep, and, of course, his sense of danger was intensified to such a degree that he showed his excitement by crying out: "Sirs, what must I do to be saved?" But only a little while before this there was a prayer meeting at a riverside near by, where Paul preached, and the Lord opened the heart of Lydia, who, without any excitement, attended to the things spoken by Paul, and was as really saved as the excited jailer. The second step, then, is conviction, which all who hear the gospel receive more or less.

The third step is, yielding to the Spirit's influence in conviction. Here I will have to differ with some who teach that the Holy Spirit's work can not be resisted. I take the ground that God deals with men as free agents. He could not accept worship or service that had to be forced upon one. It

must be free from the heart of men or angels. So, when the Holy Spirit convinces the sinner through the hearing of the gospel, it then becomes the sinner's high privilege to yield to this conviction, and confess himself as such to God, and before men. But, says one, can the sinner resist the conviction that is thus awakened in his heart by the Holy Spirit? To answer this question intelligently and according to the Scriptures, we will have to define conviction further, as general and effectual. General conviction is that of which we have been speaking mostly. It is that serious and solemn feeling that all who hear the gospel experience to some degree and at some times in their lives. This may be and is resisted. "Ye do always resist the Holy Ghost: as your fathers did, so do ye." Acts 7:51.

But when the sinner yields to the Spirit's influence or call, then the conviction, or the call, becomes effectual, and he no longer wishes to resist. For when a man has yielded to the conviction or influence of the Holy Spirit, he then has virtually turned his back on the world and the evil one, and feels a real desire to forsake sin and serve God. And this leads to or is the beginning of the next step, which is repentance towards God and its twin sister, "faith in Jesus Christ." When man begins to acknowledge that he has done wrong, he then begins to repent of that wrong, whether committed against God or man. So, yielding is to repent. But what is real repentance? It is deep sorrow in the heart for sin, which leads one to hate the sin and turn from it in reality and in truth. And it leads to sincere confession of sin, and earnest seeking after forgiveness. It leads, also, to deep humility of heart—a humility that banishes all pride and self-sufficiency. The sinner must, so to speak, go down in dust and ashes before God, and feel himself as unworthy as the prodigal did, and be

willing to accept anything that God in His mercy may be willing to give. Then faith in Jesus Christ and Him crucified, which the man may have had all along in some sense, becomes active and leads to trust and obedience. All this brings the heart of the sinner into that state in which the conditions of salvation are met, and then follows the next step, which is conversion, or the new birth. This is wholly the work of the Spirit of God alone, without the aid of any ceremony whatever. The body enters this world by natural birth; the soul enters the kingdom of heaven by supernatural birth through the power of the Holy Spirit. One can not see this world, or experience it in any sense, except he is born into it; and so one can not see, or perceive, or experience the kingdom of heaven, except he is born into it from above. "Except a man be born again, he can not see the kingdom of God." John 3:3.

The next step, if I may so term it, is the indwelling of the Spirit. When a person is born of the Spirit, then his body becomes a temple, in which the Holy Spirit of God takes up His abode. The object of this indwelling is to teach, to comfort, to guide, to enlighten, and to help in all needed ways. He teaches the Christian to a better understanding of the Scriptures, and how to pray. He comforts the child of God in many ways. Christ called Him the Comforter. He guides by impressing the mind and conscience in right ways. He enlightens and illuminates the mind, and thus enlarges the vision of the Christian, especially in spiritual things. He helps the child of God to live right, to shun evil, and to suffer if need be. And when the Christian stumbles and falls into sin in any way, the Spirit helps him to repent and thus get right with God again.

In these several steps one may become a Christian and be preserved as such through grace. For the plan of salvation is perfect. It contains no flaw. It covers every emergency. It is devised and executed by infinite wisdom and power. When Jesus died for His people, He died for all their sins. They were all foreknown and all provided for in the atonement. The debt was all paid. It is not our love to God that keeps us. But it is God's love that holds us. "Who shall separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus?" Rom. 8:35. If Christians sometimes do wrong, and there are none that do good and sin not, it is their duty to confess it to God, who says that "He is faithful and just to forgive." Faithful because He has promised, and just because the sin was atoned for by Christ on the cross. But, says one, there are many sins of ignorance. And, again, a Christian may sin and then die suddenly, having no time to repent or confess. Well, all this is covered by the intercession of Christ. He died for our sins, He rose again for our justification, and He has ascended to heaven to the right hand of the Father to intercede for us.

But our salvation will not be complete in all respects till our bodies are also redeemed in the resurrection and made holy, like unto the glorified body of our Redeemer now in heaven.

SERMON V.

RETRIBUTION.

Text: "As thou hast done, it shall be done unto thee."—Obadiah 15.

The prophet Obadiah denounced judgments against Edom, or the Edomites, for their bad treatment of the Jews in their distress, and for rejoicing over their calamities. The Edomites were descendants of Esau, the brother of Jacob, both of whom were the sons of Isaac. Jacob and Esau had a falling out in their youth. Esau was the first born and so thought he ought to have the birthright, though he had sold it to Jacob. Jacob, however, got the birthright, not because he had bought it, but because God had said before the children were born that the elder should serve the younger. On account of this early feud in the family of Isaac, the two brothers and their descendants were never afterwards fully reconciled. When the children of Jacob or Israel were passing through the wilderness from Egypt to the promised land, the Edomites would not let them pass through their borders. And so they had to go a long and painful distance to surround the country of Edom, or, as it was later called Idumea. And after the Israelites were settled in their own country, the Edomites were always jealous of them, and took every advantage of them possible to harass them or to do them an injury. And when Judah and Jerusalem were in dire distress on account of the war waged against them by Nebuchadnezzar, the Edomites were glad and rejoiced over their downfall, and took pleasure in persecuting those of them who were trying to escape. All these things gave rise to Obadiah's

prophecy, and to the text. "As thou hast done, it shall be done unto thee." And it was so done.

The first head of the sermon, then, is, To show how God has always sent retribution upon those nations which have mistreated the Jewish people. It was not long after God had destroyed Jerusalem by the hand of the king of Babylon, before he sent a more terrible destruction upon Idumea or Edom, by the hand of the same Nebuchadnezzar. And not only upon them, but also upon all the nations and peoples round about, that had so long mistreated the Jews, God's ancient people. And mark the difference God made between his people and their enemies. The Jews were punished. They were carried into captivity. But at the end of seventy years they were delivered and brought back to their own country again. But what of Edom and all those other nations which maltreated the Jews? They were utterly destroyed, and have ever since been lost sight of in history as such. Even Babylon, the means that God used to punish the Jews in their wickedness, was, in a few years afterwards, destroyed root and branch. The nation and the city are no more. The Babylonians were punished, though God sent them to afflict the Jews. Because they, in afflicting the Jews, did it with an evil intent.

The next nation to be noticed as persecuting the Jews is the empire of Rome. God used this empire at first to punish the Jewish nation, after they had rejected and crucified their King, the Lord Jesus, as he had Nebuchadnezzar before. But the Romans persisted in persecuting and killing the Jewish people for centuries after Jerusalem fell, just because they hated them and wished to destroy them from the face of the earth. And as they did and wished to do, it was done to them as the text says. For God finally completely destroyed the whole

Roman Empire, and there is now no such people as Romans on the face of the earth. But the Jews still exist as a peculiar people, preserved by the overruling hand of Providence.

Then comes Spain as the next nation who so cruelly mistreated God's ancient people. About the beginning of modern times, during and after the Reformation period, many nations of Europe were very cruel to the dispersed Jews. But none were so intensely cruel as Spain. And for several centuries they, as well as Christians, were hunted down and put to death, with every species of torment that the ingenuity of wicked men could devise. Spain, during the sixteenth century, was one of the richest and most powerful nations in Europe. But where is she now? She is not destroyed, but sunk so low that she is a byword, so to speak, among the nations of the earth.

The last to be noticed in this connection is Russia. Since the other nations of Europe have become more civilized they have left off, to a large extent, their malice and cruelty towards the Jews, but Russia has been for a long time, and still is, the worst enemy on earth to them. And any student of the history of modern Europe can see, at a glance, that Russia is under a ban or a curse of some kind. Though covering more territory than any other country on earth, she is cursed with a despotic government, torn by internal dissensions, and her armies, as we have seen in late years, are helpless in the hand of a little island empire like Japan, not as large as one of her provinces. Seek as we may for the causes of all this, we must at last come to this conclusion, that Russia is under a curse, because of her continual and relentless cruelty to the Jews. Retribution is falling on Russia, as on Idumea of old, and what the end is to be, no one can tell.

And I am proud to say just here that our country, the United States of America, is the only nation of people in the civilized world that is absolutely free from the persecution of the Jewish people. And God's peculiar blessing is to-day, and has been from the first, resting upon our country and our people, as upon no other country on the face of the earth. The words of the text can be applied both ways. We have been good to the Jews, God has been good to us. Edom was cruel to the Jews, and God was cruel to them. "As thou hast done, it shall be done unto thee."

The second head pertains to nations that mistreat the true church. The Roman Empire, Spain, and Russia have already been disposed of on this subject, because they were, or are, cruel to both Jews and Christians. Catholic and Mohammedan countries are now the chief enemies of true Christianity; such, for instance, as Italy and Turkey. The truth is, there is no real prosperous and flourishing country today that is under the control of popery or Mohammedanism. All really prosperous nations of Europe or America are Protestant, not Catholic. Mohammedan countries, like Turkey, are under a withering curse, and will be as long as they continue haters of Christianity. And in the American continents, the difference between Protestant and Catholic is so marked that it must be noticed. Why the great difference between the United States, and Mexico and the Republics of South America? The first is Protestant, and the home and asylum of the true church of God. The latter are Catholic to the core, and persecutors, as far as possible of true Christians.

European countries today are prosperous in proportion as they are Protestant and friendly to real Christianity. But, says one, France is an exception. But my reply is, France is an anomaly. She

is now under a deeper and more far-reaching curse than any other nation in Europe. She is more deeply dyed by the blood of martyrs than any other except Spain itself. Two of the most bloody massacres that have ever blotted the pages of history occurred in France. The first was in the early part of the thirteenth century. When the pope and his church had become unusually active in killing out the true church, and when all kings and princes and barons were forbidden to harbor them in their territories, it so happened that in certain southern provinces of France there were multitudes of them. And as they were good, industrious, and obedient citizens the barons would not carry out the demands of the pope. So he ordered a crusade of the worst men that could be mustered in all Europe, and sent them down there and butchered tens of thousands of men, women, and children, and made the country almost a desert.

The second massacre was that of St. Bartholomew, which occurred on the 24th of August, 1572. This was the slaughter of the Huguenots, a body of Protestant Christians who lived in France. This slaughter was sanctioned by the king and his advisers. The stain of these atrocious crimes was not washed out even by the blood of the French Revolution and the Reign of Terror something over a hundred years ago. And now, though France is nominally Catholic, her leading men of influence have virtually rejected God and all religion whatever, and are trying to hurl the whole nation into Atheism. Poor France! Having rejected true Christianity, and having become disgusted with Catholicism, what else could she do? "As thou hast done, it shall be done unto thee." The end is not yet. What God has in store for France, future generations may tell, but we can't.

Under the third head we will apply the text to individual retribution.

The first case to be noted is that of Joseph's brethren. They hated him and finally sold him into slavery, hoping to get clear of both him and his dreams. But God's purposes must and will stand. In a few years Joseph had passed from slavery through imprisonment to be the second in power in the kingdom of Egypt. His father and brethren are sore distressed by the famine that came upon all lands. Jacob, hearing there was corn in Egypt, sends his ten sons, the ones who had sold Joseph, into Egypt to buy food. On their arrival they bow themselves down humbly to the governor of the land, who was none other than Joseph, who knew them but was himself a stranger to them. He treated them harshly and called them spies, and put them all in prison for three days. This he did to see if they were still the hard-hearted and cruel men they were when last they parted. He then sent them all back with corn except one, whom he retained in prison till they should come again. On the next trip he seemed to treat them kindly at first. But having hid his silver cup in the sack of the youngest, he had an officer sent to overtake them and search their sacks for the lost property. It was found, to their dismay, in Benjamin's sack. With sad and gloomy hearts they all go back to the governor and resign themselves to him as his slaves. It had come back to them. Their sin had found them out. Retribution to the full was upon them. As they had done, it was done unto them.

The next and last case is that of Ahab and his wicked queen Jezebel. Ahab was king of Israel, and reigned in Samaria. He seems to have had a house in the city of Jezreel. And near that house or home of his was a vineyard owned by Naboth.

Ahab wanted that vineyard, and offered to buy it, but Naboth refused to sell because it was the inheritance of his fathers. So Ahab went into his house in Samaria and developed a case of the pouts, like a foolish child, because he could not do as he pleased. Jezebel inquired of him the trouble, and he told her that he wanted Naboth's vineyard, but he could not buy it, as Naboth would not sell. She told him to eat and be merry, and she would get the vineyard for him. So she wrote to the elders of Naboth's city to appoint a fast, or feast rather, and invite Naboth to it, and set him in a high place. And then while he was there to get two wicked men to come in and accuse Naboth of blaspheming God and the king, and have him carried out and stoned to death. All this was done. And she then told Ahab to go down and take possession of the vineyard, as Naboth was dead.

And as Ahab reached the vineyard, he met Elijah the prophet, who denounced the judgments of God on both him and his wife. He told Ahab that dogs would lick his blood in the same place where they had licked that of Naboth. This was literally fulfilled in the case of Ahab's son Jehoram. II Kings 9:26. Ahab himself was wounded in a battle and died in his chariot, and buried at Samaria. The blood was washed out of his chariot there and the dogs licked it also. I Kings 22:38. And some time after this, Jehu became king, and had Jezebel thrown out of a window and trampled her under foot, and the dogs ate her flesh in Jezreel. II Kings 9:35, 36, 37. Thus retribution fell on these and on their posterity. For Jehu had all of Ahab's children and relatives put to death, as Naboth and his sons were stoned, so that the inheritance would revert to the king. As they had done, it was done unto them.

Other cases might be cited in the Bible, and in history; but I forbear.

Now, let us apply the text to cases in our own experience and observation. We have all no doubt observed cases in which men and families have had to suffer the same things, in effect, that they had caused other people to suffer. As people sow, they must reap. Oppressors will be oppressed if it is in the third generation. Those who make drunkards will have drunkard in their own families sooner or later. "Murder will out." One's sins will find him out. "As thou hast done, it shall be done unto thee."

And in our own experience, don't we often have to suffer things that remind us of something we did in the past? Especially is this true of those of us who gave unnecessary pain or trouble to our parents. All such things come back in one way or another. As we do, it will be done unto us.

Then suffer this admonition: Be kind to your parents. Treat every one right. Do as you would be done by. Oppress none. Help all you can. Pray for everybody. Love everybody. Then, when retribution comes, as come it must, it will be a pleasure and not a grief.

SERMON VI.

THE ONENESS OF GOD'S PEOPLE.

Text: "That they all may be one."—John 17:21.

Our Saviour prayed here for the unity of His people on earth. That there might be one flock, one shepherd, and one fold. The most lamentable fact in regard to Christianity at this time is its want of unity. But in discussing this matter, I shall not follow the usual line of thought, but a new line altogether, so far as I know. I shall plead for a unity of Christians on the old basis, and not the unity of churches on a new basis. For, in my judgment, the church of Jesus Christ is not divided at this time, nor has it ever been. That Christianity is divided is evident. Now, let us go to the root of the matter and see how all this want of unity among Christians came about.

We will all admit that the original New Testament churches, established by the inspired apostles, constituted a unity of doctrine, of form, of harmony, of work, and of fellowship. There was only one denomination. And again, all must admit that these New Testament churches were right as to their organization, their faith, their practice and their ordinances. To say, or even to think otherwise, would be to impeach the Holy Spirit Himself. Then, all this being admitted, when did the apostolic church or churches begin to differ? Or when did they begin to split up into different denominations? My answer to these questions is this: The true church of Jesus Christ and His apostles has never undergone any radical or permanent change, but it has existed as such through all the ages from apostolic times to the present day. I say radical or permanent, because during

the Dark Ages it sometimes happened that, on account of terrible persecutions, the brethren became so scattered, and had so few facilities for meeting together and teaching and being taught, they could not well keep to the old principles in every particular. But the time never did come but that, in some place, bodies of Christians could be found still holding to the main or fundamental principles of the apostolic church, and were observing the ordinances of the church as they were once for all delivered to the saints. These bodies or churches constituted during those dreadful times the woman or the true church in the wilderness.

Now, let us go back and see how this came about that there was a great and rich body of so-called Christians persecuting another small and weak body of Christians, and trying by fire and sword to exterminate them from the face of the earth.

Well, it was this way. When Jesus the Son of God was born, the devil tried to kill Him through Herod. Then when Jesus was baptized the devil was permitted to do his best to ruin the Saviour and the whole plan of salvation by corrupting the very Son of God Himself, through temptation. This having failed, he went to work through the Jewish rulers to destroy Jesus in some way. At last he seemed to succeed in this, as it was in fulfillment of the Scriptures that He should die for His people. The devil thought then that the scheme of man's redemption was completely ruined forever. But to make the matter doubly sure, he had the grave sealed and guarded by the authority of the whole Roman Empire, whose power at that time was supreme in all the world. But seals and Roman guards were impotent to hold Him who was, though in the grave, the master of Rome and the devil too. So, when the Saviour had ascended to heaven and left a few fishermen and women to

propagate His gospel and build up a kingdom that was to conquer all other kingdoms and fill the whole world, the old enemy, Satan, again applied to the Jewish rulers to quash the whole concern. But all their efforts were futile, because, as Gamaliel said, it was fighting against God. So the more they persecuted, the more Christianity spread. At last they succeeded in dispersing the Christians from Judea and Jerusalem into all surrounding countries. But that was the best thing that could be done. So all efforts through the Jews failed utterly.

Satan's next attempt to destroy the church of God was through the Roman Empire as a civil power. In this great civil government Satan held a high seat. The infidel historian Gibbon tried hard to explain to his readers, in his "Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire," why it was that Rome permitted and protected every form of heathen worship that had ever been invented by corrupt human hands, but sought, by every means in its great power, to suppress and stamp out Christianity. But with all his vast learning and research, Gibbon failed entirely to give any satisfactory solution of the problem, because he was an unbeliever in Christianity. Minds much inferior to his, but imbued with the true spirit of the religion of Jesus Christ, may find the answer with the utmost ease. It is this: Satan, as has been said above, was the chief moral factor in Rome. All idolatry was of his invention, and well-pleasing to him. But Christianity was and is of God, and as such was hated by Satan with a perfect hatred. Hence he sought, through the emperors, and through all the branches of authority in the empire, to kill out and destroy the church of the true God. But, though Rome, instigated by the evil one, did her utmost, and blood flowed freely in all her provinces, and

under all her emperors for three centuries; and though the wild beasts in the amphitheatre were gorged with the warm flesh and blood of Christians, yet the very blood of the martyrs became the seed of the church. Thus all Satan's efforts through Imperial Rome had failed. And Satan found himself in the predicament of a certain little boy many years ago. He came across one of those strange spider-like insects with a very small, round body and tremendously long legs, which, for want of a better name, the people called "grandsire graybeard." This said boy was told by his elders not to kill the insect, for if he did, nine more would come in his place. So the boy let the graybeard go on his way unharmed. For he thought if he should kill him, and nine more came, and they likewise should be killed, after awhile the whole house would be filled with them. Satan, however, did not finally conclude to stop killing Christians, that was contrary to his nature, but he did conclude to change his mode of proceedings to destroy the true church. So his next move was to try to destroy the church by corrupting some of its fundamental doctrines, and thereby taking away its power to antagonize his own kingdom, and be the means of saving men. And the means for doing this was readily found in the church itself. For the time has never been when the church of God was entirely free from bad men among its own members. Among the twelve disciples was one Judas. In the Pentecostal church at Jerusalem, the first organized church in the world, there was an Ananias. In the church at Samaria there was Simon the sorcerer. And Paul writes to Timothy of Demas and of Alexander the coppersmith. So all the evil one had to do was to get into some of the bad, unregenerate men who had by some means crept into the churches of the second and third centuries of

the Christian era, and work through them. And their first act was to eliminate repentance, the very mudsill on which Christianity is founded. Repentance was the first thing preached by John the Baptist, by Jesus the Christ, and by the apostles, and still is the burden of all sound preaching. For we are commanded to preach that men repent. But repentance is repugnant to the evil heart of man. It demands confession of sin in dust and ashes. It requires forsaking and hating sin in high and low places. It demands self-denial and cross-bearing. And it demands a new heart through this humble repentance, and faith in Jesus Christ and Him crucified. Against all these things the wicked heart of poor fallen man rebels. And so, in order to effect their purpose and thus eliminate this objectionable feature, they seized upon the beautiful ordinance of baptism, which was intended to symbolize the washing of regeneration by the Holy Spirit, and made of it regeneration itself, or the only means of effecting it. So, all one had to do to be saved was to be baptized and do as the pope or priest should tell him, and all would be well. And thus, in course of time, repentance toward God was replaced by penance, that is, a slight suffering for one's own sins, so that the priest could pardon them. The Holy Spirit was replaced by baptism in water, and the mumbling, meaningless words of a priest who was fully possessed by the spirit of the devil. Christ Himself was replaced by the pope, the son of perdition, and the chief ally of Satan himself. By these means Christianity began to grow popular among men. And then, to top the climax, Satan put it into the heart of Constantine, an emperor of the Roman world, to become a convert to Christianity, and to adopt it as the religion of the empire, and thus unite church and state in an unholy bond of union. The next

step was to unite all the separate organizations into one great body under the leadership of the Pope of Rome, who was called, by his deluded followers, the Vicar of Christ. That is, one possessed of power to do Christ's work on earth as his vicerent. And the final downward step was, to put the Bible away from the people and sink them as low as possible in ignorance and superstition, so that they would be simply passive in the hands of the pope to do his bidding. Thus gradually the fundamental doctrines of religion were changed so far as the masses of the people were concerned, and the organization of the church or churches of apostolic days completely revolutionized.

But now, after all this was done, was the church of Jesus Christ corrupted? Not at all. Well, then, where was the true church? It was in the wilderness, in the place that God had prepared for it, where it was to remain for twelve hundred and sixty years. And what was this other great organization that was called the church of God, and was making so much noise in the world and getting control of all things secular and religious? That was, and is, a counterfeit church pure and simple. It was not, is not, and never will be, the church of Christ in any sense whatever; but it was from start to finish, is to-day, and ever will be the corrupt and abominable mother of harlots and abominations of the earth. While Satan and his coadjutors were thus endeavoring to corrupt the doctrines of Christianity, and were setting on foot a great ecclesiastical organization, the true Christians dropped out gradually without much noise, and held on to their religion, in the midst of irreligion, and kept pure the doctrines of the true church in the midst of corruption and falsehood. And when that great counterfeit church perceived this, and recognized the fact that a few true follow-

ers of Christ dared to condemn them as the Anti-christ spoken of by John, then the pope and his people began to hurl anathemas against them as heretics worthy of nothing but death and damnation. Thus the breach between the true church of Jesus Christ and that accursed thing, the man of sin and son of perdition, was complete. And the gulf separating them was, and is, and ever will be, as wide as the distance between heaven and hell.

Now, I am prepared to say that those, whom Rome called heretics and persecuted as long as she had power to do so, constituted the true church of Christ through all the Dark or Middle Ages of the world's history. They were the woman in the wilderness, as we have it in Revelation, twelfth chapter. And at first the great red dragon, and then the beast, his successor, cast out water from his mouth after the woman that she might be swallowed up of the flood. But the earth helped the woman by opening her mouth and absorbing the flood that was cast forth to drown the woman. The flood of water here cast out of the mouth of the serpent or dragon was the corrupt teachings and foolish dogmas that were scattered over the world by the devil and the pope. But the earth swallowed it all up, as a desert would a river flowing through it, before it could reach the asylum that God had provided for the woman, His church.

Of course the true gospel church all through these dreadful times was weak and hated by all the world besides. And what little crops out in the history of those days about them was mostly written by their enemies and bears the true mark of the Anti-christ, or Rome. But the things they were charged with, and for which many of them suffered, were the things the apostolic churches stood for, or would have condemned had they then existed. These good people, being the true gospel

church, existed during all the ages down to and after the Reformation. They existed in different parts of Europe, and at different times, under different names, derived from their leaders, or from the places in which they lived and flourished more or less. At the time of the Reformation they offered to become co-workers with the Reformers, but as their doctrine and practice were free from all the marks of the beast, and the Reformers thought best to retain many of those pernicious marks, there could be no union or agreement between them; and, as a consequence, the Reformed churches afterwards became as bitter persecutors of the original church as Rome ever was.

Now the next question is, what shall we make of those different organizations that sprung up during the Reformation period, and of others which have sprung up since? Well, the Reformers did a great work for the civil as well as the religious world. But their great blunder in religion was, they built not on the eternal rock only, but they built partly on the rock and partly on the sand; for they tried to reform Romanism as a system of religion, taking it for granted that it was the true church, only badly corrupted and defiled. That was their egregious error. Romanism was not in any sense the church of God and never had been. And to reform as rotten a thing as Romanism has ever been was about as hopeless a task as it would be to reform the devil himself, or to change the leopard's spots, or to wash an Ethiopian white. They couldn't reform popery; they couldn't make anything good out of Romanism. And so all they could do was to leave that false system entirely and go back all the way to the solid rock of gospel truth; or to secede from Romanism and set up for themselves, with a mixture of gospel and popery. They chose the latter; and Christianity

and the cause of truth have been suffering ever since on account of that sad blunder.

These organizations, then, that came into existence during the Reformation period, and some that have come up since are, to say the most of them that can be truthfully said, organizations of Christians, but not gospel churches. They have a great deal of truth and good gospel doctrine, but they are sadly beset and hampered and defiled by many of the old marks of the Romish beast, that had their origin in the old serpent. Many great and good men in these organizations to-day see all this as well as I do, but their denominational pride is so strong they won't confess it.

Now let us note the marks of a real gospel church—the church of the apostolic age. A true church is thus defined: “A body of baptized believers, observing the ordinances of the Lord's house, as they were once for all delivered to the saints.” And the word baptized here is immersed, buried with Christ in baptism. The word believers means that all have made an intelligent profession of their faith and been voluntarily immersed on that profession. Again an apostolic church was a little republic wholly independent of all other such organizations, and having no head but Christ, and no lawgiver but the word of God. And again apostolic churches had but two orders of officers—pastors and deacons. Pastors were sometimes called by other names, but it is generally conceded that they designated the same office. Again, apostolic churches were missionary in a preeminent degree. The great commission was to them their marching orders. Now is there any church or denomination of Christians to-day that shows all these marks of apostolic churches in organization, faith, and practice? Certainly there is? The Regular or Missionary Baptist churches fill the bill in every particular.

Now let us notice some of the marks of Romanism that all Pedo-baptist churches hold, to a greater or less extent. The first is ecclesiasticism. That is the union of all organizations into one great body, which great body is called the church. This body is ruled over by one supreme officer called pope, bishop, presbyter, etc. And then under them other subordinate officers. All this was unknown to the apostles and sprang up together with Romanism, and is of Rome only, and is one of the unfailing marks of Anti-christ. Then, again, different modes of baptism had their origin in the incipient stages of Romanism, and were sanctioned by a council of that church in 1311 A. D. That council made pouring or sprinkling equally valid with immersion. Hence that is of Rome only. And the baptism of infants grew out of the old dogma of baptismal regeneration. When this error became established in the beginning of Romanism, mothers wanted to know how their babies could be saved without baptism. The result was it finally became the practice of the Roman Catholic church to *regenerate* all the children by baptism. This is of Rome sure enough; and how a Pedo-baptist minister of education and sense can practice this most egregious error of Rome with a straight face is more than I can understand. Another thing coming from Rome is, making the ordinances sacraments. Baptism and the Lord's Supper are by many denominated sacraments. That means, if I understand it aright, that through these ordinances special grace or graces come to those receiving them. But these two beautiful church ordinances were never intended to be the means of conferring graces or blessings, but to set forth the two fundamentals of Christ's redeeming work. The supper points to His crucified body and His shed blood. Baptism points to His burial

and resurrection. His death and His resurrection constitute the two pillars on which the redemption of the sinner is founded.

In conclusion, then, we have found these things to be true: That Christ and His apostles founded the true church of God. That this church has existed from the day of Pentecost down to the present day. Jesus said, "The gates of hell shall never prevail against it." That this church has never been permanently corrupted or changed. That those things which seemed to be changes in doctrine and practice during the second, third, and fourth centuries, resulted in the upbuilding of Roman Catholicism and the total separation of that wicked concern from the true church of Jesus Christ. That this true church existed all during the persecutions of the civil Roman Empire, and all through the still worse persecutions of papal Rome, even with its bloody inquisition, and all through the turmoils and changes of the Reformation period, and finally emerged into the light of the eighteenth, nineteenth, and twentieth centuries, unhurt and unstained, as well as unchanged. Her blood has stained and hallowed the soil of Asia, Africa, Europe, and America. She has never persecuted, but has always been the sufferer along that line. She has always stood for the word of God in the true and simple meaning and for the Bible in the hand of the people. She has ever stood for religious liberty and for the freedom of one's conscience, to worship without the interference of civil powers. She has ever stood for a converted membership. She has always advocated the immersion of believers only, thereby excluding unconscious infants from that ordinance. She has ever taught and practiced the confining of the Lord's Supper to baptized members in good standing of true apostolic churches only. And, that

Roman Catholicism has never been the church of Jesus Christ in any sense whatever; but that she is a counterfeit organization claiming to be the church. And further, that all those organizations which came forth out of Romanism, either directly or indirectly, and which have retained more or less of the errors of the popish church, are not the true church, or churches of Jesus Christ, and never can be, so long as they hold on to Rome's inventions and refuse to conform to the word of God. Could the Apostle Paul come again to this earth and be permitted to enter a Baptist church and hear the word preached, and see the observance of the Lord's Supper, and witness baptisms as they are now performed by us, he would recognize at once that he was in a real church of Christ. But if he should enter a Pedit-baptist church and see, at least, what they call baptism performed on a little child, he would certainly have to ask some one to tell him what kind of an organization that could be, and what they were doing to or for that child. For surely Paul never saw or dreamed of such a thing in the church of Christ in his day. And, lastly, we have found that, though the real church has not been divided, yet Christianity is badly divided. And this we all deplore.

Now we come back to the main point of the text. Jesus prayed that His people might all be one, as He and the Father were one. But under present conditions how is this to be done? It can never be accomplished by forming a union of these different denominations. A general congress of Christians can never invent a platform on which they can all unite. Then what can be done? Well, it is simple enough. Here in the midst of all these contending parties and factions of Christians there is the true and apostolic church in all its simplicity, standing squarely on the Bible, and every inch of

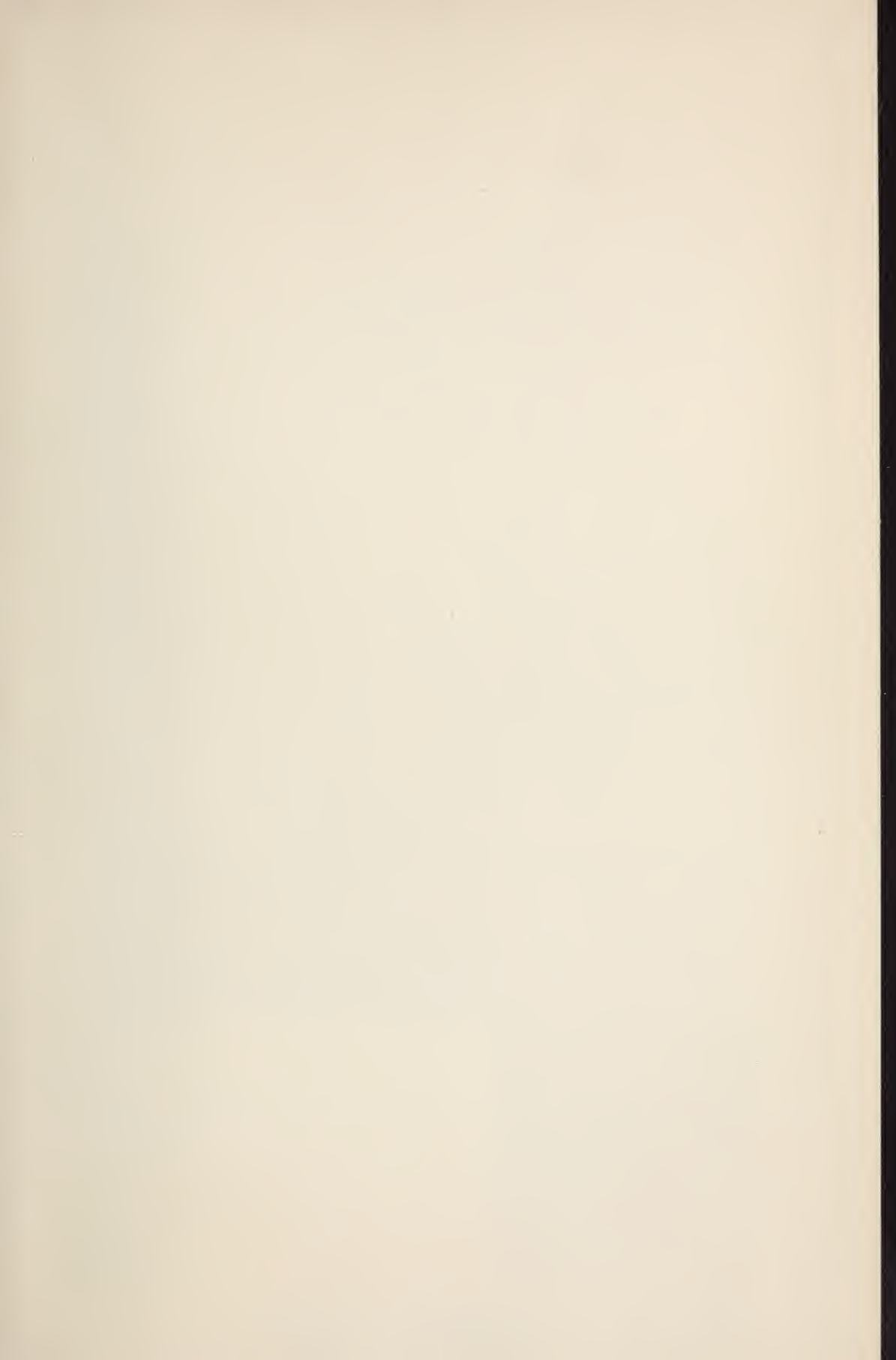
that Bible, and inviting them to cast aside all their creeds, confessions, and Romish dogmas, and take shelter under her wings that have covered the martyrs of all ages.

When God had shown Moses the forms of the holy things He was to make for the tabernacle, His last charge was, "See thou make them after the pattern showed thee in the mount." So here in the midst of a divided Christendom, is the pattern given from the cross of Calvary, so to speak, and Jesus is calling to His people of every name, and saying, see the pattern and conform to it. Then let all things, however old and sacred they may seem to be, that differentiate all other denominations from the pattern, be cast aside, as the errors of fallible men, and let them conform strictly to, and be content with, what Christ and His inspired apostles have laid down as the pattern.

Then His people will all be one. One flock, one shepherd, and one fold. So mote it be.

AMEN.





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